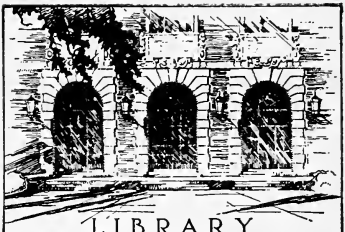
Joseph F. Duckett



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

x823
C386r
v.2

ROSELLA,

OR

MODERN OCCURRENCES.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By Mary Charlton, Author of Phedora, &c.

VOL. II.

Dublin:

PRINTED FOR P. WOGAN—W. PORTER—AND T. BURNSIDE.

1800.

X8 25
C386r
v.2

ROSELLA.

CHAP. I.

A Hiſtory, and a Rencontre.

FROM this time a ſort of *guerre maſquée* ſubſiſted between Oberne and Roſella, who was ſometimes nearly offended by his flying ſarcaſms: neither did they in the leaſt delight her friend, who was wonderfully ſurpriſed that he had not by this epoch fallen into penſive muſings, and betrayed himſelf by caſting lingering looks of adoration and deſpair upon his young and lovely companion, a failure ſhe could not by any means account for.

To any ſentiment of particular partiality for Oberne, of which Roſella had ſuſpected her, Miſs Beauclerc had not the ſmalleſt bias; and indeed ſo entirely was her imagination occupied by the charming eclat which ſhe hoped her beloved child would make in the annals of romance, that ſhe never gave a paſſing thought to the poſſibility of renewing her own adventures, by exciting ardent admiration (like a certain lady of devout memory, who lived like

a good houſewife in a ſmall houſe by the ſide of the bourn), merely by the enchantment of matronly ſmiles and flowing grey locks.

Every one of the party was ſo completely tired of their forced reſidence at Lanerk, that on the day following their excurſion to the falls, Miſs Beauclerc, not finding herſelf incommoded by the effort, removed to Hamilton, and the day after returned to Glaſgow, where ſhe found a packet from her faithful Selina; and Roſella was told that ſhe had delicately hinted her ſorrow that the correſpondence between Lydia and her had ſo much languiſhed; but that Miſs Ellinger was writing a letter to her beloved young friend, and ſhe hoped their epiſtolary intercourſe would now be more frequent.

Roſella, chagrined to be importuned upon a ſubject ſo inimical to her ideas, as intimacy and friendſhip with Miſs Lydia, promiſed, nevertheleſs, that ſhe would not neglect the wiſhes of Mrs. Ellinger, and her friend was pleaſed with her compliance.

Mr. Oberne ſtill accompanying them, they ſet out for Loch Lomond; but as his influence increaſed with the extent of their journey, he contrived, in their way to Dumbarton, to change ſituations with Nancy, by placing her in the chaiſe he hired for himſelf. They travelled very ſlowly, as Miſs Beauclerc made herſelf believe that ſhe was not yet able to endure the leaſt fatigue, and were near three hours in the road from Glaſgow to Dumbarton; but the ſcenery was ſo delightful, that neither of her fellow-travellers complained of their protracted progreſs.

Oberne, who had in his haſty arrangement with Miſs Beauclerc, merely propoſed to accompany

company her to Glaſgow, and afterwards extended the plan to the lake, now became very inquiſitive as to the route ſhe intended to purſue, after having ſatisfied her inclination to behold the beauties of Lomond; and in reply, ſhe only told him ſhe meant to travel north-eaſt.

"To Perth?" aſked Oberne.

"I believe I may paſs through Perth in the courſe of my journey," returned Miſs Beauclerc, with an air of reſerve unuſual to her; "but at preſent I am not quite determined."

"May I aſk if you return ſoon to England?" reſumed he.

"Moſt probably in the autumn;" but, ſhe added, regarding Roſella expreſſively, "circumſtances which I cannot foreſee, muſt alone decide."

Oberne obſerved the glance caſt towards her unconſcious companion, and ruminated with a mien of gravity and chagrin. "Perhaps," ſaid he, after a pauſe of a few moments, "Miſs Montreſor and yourſelf expect an addition to your party when you quit Loch Lomond?"—She told him they did not.—"Then will you allow me to hope that you will not diſcard me yet?" reſumed he.

Roſella, whoſe head was bent with an air of extreme intereſt towards the charming banks of the Clyde on the Renfrew ſide, liſtened very attentively for the reply to this modeſt propoſal, and heard Miſs Beauclerc ſay that ſhe had no objection to viſit Perth immediately after they quitted the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond; and he might from thence, if he choſe, return to Edinburgh, whilſt Roſella and herſelf purſued their tour.

This intimation was received with much gratitude by Oberne, who entered the town of Dumbarton in high ſpirits, and perſuaded Miſs Beauclerc not to proceed any further that day. At dinner Roſella found it impoſſible to preſerve her gravity five minutes together, from the effect of his united vivacity and good humour; and when the meal was over, the Scotch landlord, underſtanding from Nancy that the party were to proceed the next morning on their route, entered the room to enquire "af the leddies wad na gang tul the Caſtle to ken what a brae place it was."

Oberne ſeconded the motion, and aſked if Miſs Beauclerc would permit him to eſcort her thither; but to her the undertaking appeared ſo ſerious, that ſhe declined it, in ſpite of the earneſt yet reſpectful entreaties of the landlord, who was in deſpair that any one ſhould paſs through Dumbarton, and not behold its bonny Caſtle; but ſhe adviſed her young companion to accept the offered protection of their fellow-traveller, and walk to it.

Roſella was extremely unwilling to go out under the ſole protection of Oberne; but, fatigued with everlaſtingly oppoſing her ſingle and unſupported opinion againſt that of her friend, and afraid of incurring his philippics if ſhe ſeemed to heſitate, ſhe aſſented, though without that cheerfulneſs that uſually marked her compliance, even when ſhe wiſhed to compliment the judgment of others at the expence of her own.

Oberne appeared gratified in being entruſted with the care of her, though while the ſubject was in diſcuſſion, he had not urged it; whilſt Miſs Beauclerc, as Roſella quitted her, breath-

ed

ed a ſecret vow that ſhe might not return without ſome charming adventure.

As they walked towards the Caſtle, Oberne, ſtill in high ſpirits, amuſed her with a few hiſtorical anecdotes which his reading and his memory happened to furniſh him with; but though ſhe felt obliged to him for his communications, they did not enliven her. Having paſſed the houſe of the Governor, they aſcended with ſome little effort by the ſteps cut in the rock, and were let through ſome immenſe iron gates, which cloſing behind them with a heavy jail-like noiſe, rather ſtartled Roſella, who found herſelf ſhut out, as it ſeemed, from the world below, and perched upon a ſtupendous cliff, adorned only at intervals by the habitations of the ſoldiers belonging to the fort.

"Now you are completely caged," ſaid Oberne, who obſerved her emotion, and gueſſed at what paſſed in her mind. "Tell me, my little prudent Roſella, what has availed all your reſerve to me, and your anger againſt your good-humoured friend, becauſe when I ſought refuge in her ſociety againſt the naked terrors of the wide world, ſhe did not drive me from the gentle umbrage to which I had crept, by a tempeſt of ſcorn and indignation! Pray obſerve that with all your circumſpection, you have ſuffered me to entrap you within theſe formidable gates, which for aught you know, may not readily open again to your bidding. However, when we arrive at the ſummit of the cliff, you will ſee that your priſon is airy, and, unlike moſt others, it will not ſhut out your proſpects."

At any other moment Roſella would have laughed at this rhodomantade, becauſe ſhe knew that Oberne often indulged himſelf in a

metapherical ſtyle of converſation; but the impreſſion made upon her mind by the peculiarity of the ſpot ſhe had attained, aided by the accidental gloom of the weather, which had ſuddenly ſhut from them the wide-ſpreading proſpect on every ſide, occaſioned her fears to combat her good ſenſe, and ſhe gazed at the countenance of Oberne in doubt and irreſolution.

He laughed at her credulity, and continued to teaze her by commenting upon the diſtreſs other damſels had endured from the tyranny of jealous lovers; and bade her be thankful that her good fortune had caſt her into the power of ſuch a courteous knight as himſelf.

At length Roſella recovered her compoſure, from perceiving that he merely amuſed himſelf with her perplexity, and even endeavoured to appear cheerful, to atone for having ſuffered herſelf to liſten to idle and romantic apprehenſions.

When they had reached the ſummit of the cliff, Oberne, pointing to the north, exclaimed, "There is Loch Lomond, towards which we are travelling—Loch Lomond, which was to have been the extent of my journeying in your ſociety, had not Miſs Beauclerc taken pity on my forlorn ſtate. I am more than doubly obliged to her; for when I had firſt the good fortune to ſee you, I was on the point of being very diſſipated and imprudent, I believe."

"Pray will you inform me truly," ſaid Roſella with a ſmile, "what reaſon decided you ſo ſuddenly in our favor, as to procure us the honor of your company from Edinburgh?"

"Faith, ſince you are frank enough to enquire in this honeſt manner, replied he, "I will tell you without varniſh or equivocation. I made

made the party in a frolic; for I was at that moment *paſſablement* idle *ennuyé*, and did not care to which point I was ſteered, provided I were amuſed for a few hours. But I found in the ſociety of Miſs Beauclerc a charm I could not eaſily give up; and I determined not to forego my ſituation whilſt I could by any means retain it. However," added he, "I had another motive—it aroſe from your exceſſive ſage and repulſive aſpect: when you heard that your friend had given me permiſſion to follow her to Glaſgow, you drew thoſe charming features into ſuch a look of dignified wiſdom, and collected ſuch a chilling atmoſphere round you, that I thought you ſeemed reſolved to freeze me off the field; the certain conſequence of which was, that I equally reſolved to keep my ground. When, inſtead of entrenching yourſelf as you did, if you had only attacked me openly, and ſaid, as with great truth you might, 'Oberne, you are a d—m—d impudent fellow to fancy that, without introduction or recommendation, you are to treſpaſs upon our good humour, and travel with us *en famille*, when, for aught we know, you may be a pick-pocket, or a bog-trotter! Go, preſumptuous dog! and find ſureties who will be reſponſible for your unſullied lineage, and unqueſtionable good demeanor;'—I muſt, as you may well ſuppoſe, have felt defeated at ſuch an addreſs; and as I could not, moſt probably, have picked out any lady or gentleman voucher in Edinburgh, in the circle of my acquaintance, who happened to be known to you and Miſs Beauclerc, I ſhould at this moment have been idling there or elſewhere, provoked at my unlucky deſtiny, and envying you the undiſturbed ſweets of your peregrination."

" I never ſwear," returned Roſella, laughing; " ſo if you will efface the oath and the opprobrious epithets from the oration you ſay I ought to have made, you may, if you pleaſe, apply it at this moment, and in reply perhaps you will condeſcend to give ſome account of yourſelf."

" I like this plain dealing," ſaid he; " and as we walk down the cliff, I will give you my birth, parentage, and education: I know that a dying ſpeech and confeſſion ſhould properly follow, but for that you muſt wait till we arrive at Perth. Be it known to you then, moſt lovely Roſella," continued he in a burleſque tone, " that I was born near Killbegan, in the fifter kingdom, of honeſt parents, I believe,—but of their induſtry I never heard any vaunt; on the contrary, it is reported that my honored papa, Dennis Neil Oberne, commonly called Lord Clanallan, loſt an eſtate becauſe he was too indolent to ſearch for title-deeds,—loſt an election, becauſe he was too idle to travel fifty miles to attend it,—and loſt his life, becauſe he had unluckily no employment either of mind or body to combat his chagrin for theſe misfortunes. Hugh Oberne, my brother, had the good fortune to ſcramble on to the ſcene before me; ſo that he is, of courſe, a gentleman of much more importance than myſelf: and I have heard that I ſhall never regain the ſmall portion I originally enjoyed of his gracious favor, becauſe it happened that I was at the point of death during the election I ſpeak of, at which he ought to have been the ſucceſsful candidate;—and though I was in London, and my father in Dublin, Hugh inſiſts that his fooliſh concern for my inſignificant life occaſioned his ſtrange negligence of the advance-

ment

ment of his heir, notwithſtanding the expreſs that contained the news of my danger, had not then reached him. From that moment I became, in the eyes of my good brother, a moſt graceleſs and unpleaſant object: it was ſoon diſcovered that he was never entirely happy when I occupied a younger brother's apartment at Caſtle Oberne, or even when I took up my lodging in the third ſtory of the London-houſe; ſo I was ſent to College to make more room for poor Hugh, and from thence I was diſpatched to make a tour on the Continent, with an allowance ſo moderate, that in a year I overſtepped my credit conſiderably. I drew on Lord Clanallan for the deficient ſum, and followed my draft to England, to aſſiſt him in the trouble of honoring it; but behold, I found my friend Hugh poſſeſſed of the title, and he ſent my demand and myſelf to the devil. Fortunately, however, I ſtill retained a large ſhare of my mother's affection, who could never diſcover any thing very criminal in the unhappy blunder of not being a year older than Hugh, inſtead of the contrary; and ſhe, good ſoul, aſſiſted me in the dilemma to which I was reduced: for, independent of her jointure, to which I was entitled, I was totally deſtitute of inheritance, as my portion of the periſhable gifts of Fortune had been bequeathed me by my deceaſed father in a legacy upon the loſt eſtate, and he had never been able to gather ſufficient reſolution to alter his original will. When Lady Clanallan had taken up my draft, and preſented me with all the caſh ſhe could ſpare, I was not ſo ready as Hugh expected to retire into obſcurity, but remained ſome time in London after ſhe had departed for her reſidence in Ireland. He would have conde-

ſcended to purchaſe me a pair of colours in a marching regiment, but I preferred the Guards, and he was well aware of the impracticability of entering them, without having the undeſired ſatisfaction of maintaining me afterwards. And anxious for my welfare, he kindly employed himſelf in looking round for ſome rich bride, whoſe Engliſh guineas would improve my Iriſh deſtiny: and having ſucceeded, he demanded my thanks for his fraternal attention, and my immediate acquieſcence in his ſcheme. But the good lady he had ſelected, was of a mind and perſon ſo unhappily deformed, that I rebelled againſt his ordinations; but at length, dunned on every ſide, and threatened with a jail, I confeſs to you that I conſented to accompany him upon an expedition to obtain from my captivating dulcina, an implicit avowal of the partiality he pretended to have long diſcovered. And here my good genius prevailed;—before ſuch a deſirable explanation took place, a ſiſter of my mother died, and conſiderately bequeathed me a few thouſands;—ſo I made a low bow to my obliging brother, and a ſtill more profound one to my intended lady, and plunged violently into every folly and extravagance which offered to a fooliſh fellow juſt eſcaped from the moſt unpalatable of evils, poverty and dependance. Without much experience, my charming Roſella may ſuppoſe that my riches diminiſhed very rapidly; and I was tormented again by my brother's renewed propoſals, when Fortuae once more ſuccoured me, and I became maſter of a very pretty eſtate, exactly on the confines of his domains; and Hugh immediately obtained from me a promiſe that I would mortgage and ſell only to him. I have religiouſly adhered to my obligation;

gation; but I have been so provident, that this second supply is not half gone yet, though I have possessed it almost three years."

The manner in which this was uttered drew a smile from Rosella, who congratulated him upon his remaining three years' prospect; and promised, at his request, not to forget him in his second eclipse.

They had now almost reached the Governor's house in their descent, and the frank history Oberne had just given, had so much increased the confidence of Rosella, that she had accepted his arm, and was chatting with some gaiety, when they were met by three or four gentlemen who were ascending.

"Ha! Oberne," cried one of the party, "have you only reached Dumbarton yet? Why, my good fellow, by the haste with which you fled from Edinburgh, you ought by this time to have been Philandering on the other side of the Atlantic. Come, introduce us to this charming girl, and allow her to waste a smile or two upon your friends."

"A smile or two!" vociferated another; "Oberne knows better; — a smile from those lips is worth all the treasures of the Clyde."

Oberne, who looked equally provoked and chagrined, attempted to reply; but his *ci-devant* boon companions continued the attack with such a horrible noise and hallooing, that it was impossible he could be heard.

Rosella, mortified, shocked, and frightened, turned pale, and drawing her arm from his, made a sudden effort to retreat; but was prevented by the officious intervention of a person who, repeating her name, congratulated himself upon the pleasure of such an unexpected meeting.

meeting. Roſella, turning at this addreſs, beheld the grinning countenance of Mr. Povey, who, taking her hand with an impertinent freedom, told her he hoped ſhe would allow him the title of an old acquaintance, and recommend him as ſuch to her friend Mr. Oberne. But had ſhe meant to have complied with this inſolent requeſt, Oberne was far from being diſpoſed to admit the plea: for it was ſcarcely uttered, before he aimed a blow at the unlucky Povey, which rolled him down the path to a conſiderable diſtance, to the infinite amuſement of his companions, whoſe petulant ebullitions were, however, rather reſtrained by the atchievement.

The countenance of Oberne ſtill glowed with rage, whilſt he deſired the gentlemen to wait half an hour at the Governor's houſe. "My firſt care," added he, "muſt be to attend this young lady, whom you have ſo infamouſly inſulted, to her reſidence; my next ſhall be to demand an explanation of your conduct."

He then again ſeized the reluctant arm of Roſella, and walked off, whilſt one of the party repeated, in a loud bombaſtic tone,

"———Frowning he went;
"His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
"Their red and angry beams; as if his ſight
"Would, like the raging dog-ſtar, ſcorch the earth,
"And kindle rivers in its courſe."

Oberne bit his lips violently, and hurried on in profound ſilence, which Roſella was not tempted to interrupt; and bitterly did ſhe regret that her complaiſance had betrayed her to ſuch diſgrace: but the mien of Oberne, who was ſoothing

ſoothing his meditated vengeance by a ſoundleſs execration, forbade her to heighten his fury by indulging her own indignation.

When they reached the inn, Roſella flew to impart what had happened, to her friend, whilſt Oberne haſtened back to the Caſtle. Miſs Beauclerc could ſcarcely confine her ſatisfaction at this adventure within proper bounds. However, as ſhe now conſidered him to be moſt aſſuredly a ſerious lover of Roſella, ſhe reſolved to make the event a pretext to throw him from his hopes into the gulph of deſpair, by giving him his *conge*, and diſpenſing with his further attendance.

But Oberne appeared not till the next morning; and in the interim, Roſella repeated the little hiſtory he had given of himſelf: and Miſs Beauclerc, finding her ſurmiſes juſt with reſpect to his rank and family, altered her intention; immediately ſlew (in idea) the unworthy elder brother, a practice much countenanced by many writers ſhe eſteemed, and giving Oberne the title of Lord Clanallan, which ſhe acknowledged to ſound as prettily as Morteyne, ſhe carried Roſella (ſtill in idea) moſt triumphantly to Caſtle Oberne, as the moſt virtuous and lovely bride in the world, after having overcome, as heroines do, the malice of her fate, and forced her enemies to confeſs that ſhe was the moſt prudent and amiable creature that had ever walked (in idea) the ſurface of the globe, notwithſtanding a number of very intricate and myſterious adventures, which required great ingenuity and perſeverance to explain even to the ſatisfaction of friends and admirers.

The breakfaſt was not removed before Oberne claimed admittance; but then, inſtead of

of creeping, ſighing, and kneeling like an offending lover, he marched into the room with his uſual air, and giving Roſella a paper, told her he hoped ſhe would accept the humble *amende* of the unfortunate miſcreants who had incurred her diſpleaſure the preceding evening.

She opened it, and found a confeſſion of extreme miſbehaviour, and a ſolicitation of pardon and oblivion, ſigned by four names, including that of Povey. Roſella profeſſed herſelf ſatisfied that this unpleaſant affair had terminated; but not ſo Miſs Beauclerc—ſhe was extremely provoked at the ſeeming non-chalance of Oberne, when ſhe had expected at leaſt ſome ſword and piſtol buſineſs, even if ſhe had been diſappointed of the anguiſh and deſpair he ought to have exhibited. He perceived the diſpleaſure ſhe nouriſhed, and exerted himſelf to reſtore her good humour; but ſhe received his aſſiduities with coldneſs, and ſuddenly ordered a chaiſe to carry her from Dumbarton, without ſeeming to remember that Oberne had obtained her permiſſion to travel with her.

He obſerved the decay of his intereſt with a chagrin he could not conceal, though he ſtill laboured to appear unconcerned; and Roſella ſaw his extreme uneaſineſs with ſome compaſſion, for ſhe began to imagine that he was really attached to her friend, in ſpite of her age and her faded charms.

Miſs Beauclerc having quitted the room to give directions to Nancy, Oberne advanced to Roſella, and aſked if ſhe likewiſe condemned him for a caſualty it was not in his power to foreſee or avert.

"Or

"Or perhaps," continued he, "Miſs Beauclerc has heard of the meeting of laſt night, and diſapproves it. Yet what could I do? Was I to hear your name mentioned in my preſence in a light manner, and not puniſh ſuch inſolence?—No!—Miſs Beauclerc means, I ſuppoſe, to retract the permiſſion ſhe gave me to accompany her to the Lake; and if ſo, I ſhall have leiſure to ſettle this affair more to my ſatisfaction."

"For Heaven's ſake do not think any more of it," exclaimed Roſella, alarmed at the threatened ſtorm; "is it not already ſettled—have I not received the apology?"

"But I find myſelf diſſatisfied with it," returned he. "Why is Miſs Beauclerc unjuſt enough to make me do penance for the impertinence by which I am equally aggrieved with herſelf?'

"Surely you muſt allow," ſaid Roſella, that ſhe has ſufficient cauſe for vexation, in finding that I have been expoſed to the curioſity and cenſure of people, who have proved that their judgment of me is neither charitable nor juſt. I am ſorry you made my name a ſubject of conteſt, and I hope you will give up any idea of reviving it."

"I promiſe you," returned he, "that your name ſhall not be circulated in this curſed affair—no, my dear Miſs Montreſor, my amiable Roſella, theſe names are with me too ſacred to be repeated flippantly in my hearing, nor ſhall you be cenſured or inſulted with impunity in my preſence, whilſt I have breath."

Roſella ſuppoſed, from the very animated manner in which he ſpoke, that he was burleſquing the knight-errant; and pleaſed that he had

had recovered his good.humour, which ſhe hoped would induce him to forget his fighting ſcheme, thanked him with a ſmiling countenance, and ran to aſſiſt in arranging the writings and books of her friend, which was a taſk not quickly performed.

When ſhe ſtepped into the chaiſe with Miſs Beauclerc, ſhe obſerved another in waiting for Oberne, who did not venture, however, to propoſe the exchange with Nancy, but contented himſelf with learning that the ladies were proceeding to the Loch, as they had intended: and in a ſhort time they arrived at Luſs, where Miſs Beauclerc was far from being diſpleaſed to behold him as aſſiduous as ever; for the prattle of Nancy had again raiſed Oberne to the poſt of honor in her opinion, by repeating what ſhe had heard at Dumbarton, of the duel at which he had hinted. It appeared, when he was himſelf queſtioned on the ſubject, that Mr. Povey either was, or pretended to be unable to riſe from his bed to receive the ſatisfaction offered to him, and that Oberne, in the fury of his indignation, had challenged every one of the party, who drew lots for the firſt turn in this pleaſant buſineſs; but the *coup d'eſſai* of his piſtol ſending a bullet through the folds of his antagoniſt's cravat, the other offenders had interfered, and compromiſed the matter by the written apology, and a promiſe never to repeat the affair with the name of Miſs Montreſor attached to it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Scots drover—darkening proſpects of a ſcandalized heroine.

AS it was rather late when the party reached Luſs, Miſs Beauclerc reſolved to poſtpone until the next morning, a voyage on the charming expanſe of water ſhe took much pleaſure in ſurveying. But Roſella, who was equally enchanted with the ſcene, could not controul her impatience to ſtroll out after dinner, though ſhe avoided the attendance of Oberne, that ſhe might not again be ſubjected to the ſhocking ſurmiſes of his gay aſſociates, ſhould chance and her evil deſtiny have conducted any of them to the banks of Loch Lomond. She therefore deſired Nancy to accompany her, and taking her arm, walked to the borders of the Lake, and contemplated from an eminence the charming iſlands ſcattered over its boſom, beautified by ſeats and villas, and enlivened by the boats paſſing from the one to the other; the Grampian hills roſe from the north, and gave majeſty and grandeur to the intereſting ſcene.

But however Roſella might exclaim and admire, poor Nancy was entirely unable to comprehend the cauſe of ſuch raptures, as ſhe happened to have a ſick head-ach, and ſecretly

ſecretly wiſhed the whole country had been drowned in the river Coquet, before ſhe had been pulled off her chair to ſee it: ſhe was beſides extremely diſcompoſed at having been waited upon at her dinner by a Luſs gentlewoman, whoſe bare legs and feet were not quite ſo clean as ſhe thought neceſſary for the occaſion; and to crown her diſpleaſure, there was not a crumb of bread fit for a Chriſtian to eat —a misfortune in which though both Roſella and her miſtreſs participated, Nancy declared was not to be put up with, by people who had ſeen what was what in more genteeler and grander places.

Roſella finding that her companion was full of complaint, and obſerving that ſhe appeared indiſpoſed, would not continue to puniſh her for her own gratification; and tearing herſelf from a contemplation that ſo much delighted her, turned back towards the village.

A group of half naked children with ruddy cheeks and golden hair, were playing by the ſide of the path ſhe walked: ſhe could not in the leaſt comprehend their language, but was pleaſed with their appearance, and diſtributed amongſt them ſome halfpence, which ſhe borrowed of Nancy: a generoſity that excited the moſt rapturous emotions in the little party, who hugged their bawbees, and ran before her, barefooted upon the rocky ground, without any ſymptoms of pain or inconvenience, till at length a little boy ſcarcely more than two years old, whoſe only garment was a ragged piece of plaid faſtened round his little body, tripped againſt a pointed crag, aud ſeverely wounded his head in the fall.

Roſella

Roſella very much ſhocked, and frightened at the cries of anguiſh he ſent forth, aſked where he lived, and deſired Nancy to help her to carry the child home. It was ſometime before ſhe could make the others underſtand her queſtion, but at length they pointed to a forlorn hut not far from the place, and thither Roſella, with conſiderable labour conveyed the little ſufferer; for Nancy pretending that the ſight of blood made her ſick, did not deign to aſſiſt her.

As ſhe was toiling up an aſcent with the boy in her arms, and panting with the effort which compaſſion alone, could have induced her to make, Oberne met her, and with an air of ſurpriſe demanded what had happened. She informed him; and being then arrived at the hut, the mother ran out, and took the unlucky bairn from her, with a look in which her concern for the child was overpowered by aſtoniſhment at the condeſcenſion of ſic a brae young leddy.

Roſella followed her into her manſion; and the child having had his wound waſhed with milk and water, which they were compelled to ſend to the next cottage for, ſhe had leiſure to examine the furniture and appendages of a Scotch hut, which was not ſuperior to any deſcription ſhe had ever met with of a Kamſchatſka dwelling. The roof was left partly open to admit the paſſage of the ſmoke, the walls were of mud, and the floor, like that upon which George Mompeſſon had laid his aching head in his retreat, was of earth, uncovered, unadorned, ſpreading her naked boſom to cradle her unadulterated children.

"Good God!" exclaimed Roſella, "I murmured lately at the hardneſs of my bed, and

and felt disgusted that it had been soiled by the pressure of limbs perhaps exhausted by fatigue, or enfeebled by sickness!"

This apostrophe was unintentionally uttered aloud, and heard by Oberne, who unnoticed by her, stood at the entrance of the hut, and was examining her countenance and motions with great attention. As her eyes wandered round her, they were attracted by an earthen pot of oatmeal and water that was placed on the peat-fire; and from reflecting upon the lodging of the poor Scottish peasant, her ideas were now occupied in reviewing their hard fare.

She took a broken wooden spoon from a little shelf, and dipping into the pottage, was going to taste it; but the woman prevented her, saying in the Scottish dialect, that it was poor people's meat, and she would not like it. Rosella would not however, be deterred from pursuing her intention, and finding the food unpalatable enough, sighed to reflect that hardly earned as it was, and sparingly devoured, it should be thought by many an English fine lady too coarse to wash her idle hands.

"Have you more children than this one?" asked Rosella.

"I hae ten bonny bairns as ony in Scotland," replied the woman, "and their fether deed bot twa months sin, as he was ganging with his kie to England."

"Going with what?" demanded Rosella.

The woman explained: and at length she discovered that he had been a drover, and with indefatigable labor and self-denial, having scraped together enough of money to adventure a beast of his own in the English market, had sold it to advantage; but was waylaid at his return,

on

on the borders of Scotland, and the produce of his long-foſtered hopes torn from him by the hand of rapine. The ſhock and diſappointment affected his health, and his economy becoming even yet more rigid, would not ſuffer him to take enough of ſuſtenance to ſupport him in his long journies, though all his meals were merely compoſed of a handful of oatmeal from the bag that hung at his back, and moiſtened in the pool by the road-ſide; till at length death overtook him on the banks of the rapid Nith, where he had laid himſelf down to reſt, under the high-arched roof of Heaven, the turf his bed—a bed he had always choſen, becauſe when he roſe from it at the dawn of day, no ſurly landlord demanded a bawbee for the lodging of the night.

Roſella was affected by the tale, and ſtill more by the tears and hapleſs deſtiny of the widow and her ten bairns; and her hand, which was ever as prompt as the drops that now rolled from her eyes, ſoon teſtified her benevolence.

The poor woman beheld the piece of gold which had been given to her in ſtupid amazement; and before ſhe recovered the recollection which ſo unexpected a viſion had taken away, her young benefactreſs had vaniſhed.

Oberne, who had ſtood immoveable until Roſella turned towards the door, on perceiving that ſhe meant to retire, haſtily moved away; but not before ſhe had caught a glimpſe of his figure in his retreat. She felt however no wiſh either of avoiding or meeting him; even the landſcape which a few minutes before had captivated her fancy, ſhe could not admire; ſhe could think only of the poor drover expiring with fatigue and famine, his laſt ſigh mingling

ling with the keen inhospitable blast that whistled round his unsheltered head.

Having rejoined Nancy, who had been very composedly nursing her ailments on a rural seat near the hut, Rosella returned to her friend, and to interest her compassion and generosity, related the little history with all the pathos she was mistress of; and her design was fully answered—for Miss Beauclerc imagining the deceased drover to have been at least an *emigre* Duke retired in this charming solitude from the cruel contumely of the world, and forgetting his former splendor in the delights of pastoral labor, resolved to restore the *ci-devant* beautiful Duchess to the comforts of competence and clean linen: but on a secondary consideration, as Rosella represented her speaking in a complete Scottish dialect, her opinion waverd, and she concluded that the deceased was either a young Scotch Noble, or that his wife was of high birth, who marrying from inclination, without in the slightest degree consulting prudence, had been driven by the cruelty of parents and relatives to desolate obscurity; yet she wondered much that the hut was not exquisitely neat and white-washed, and that Rosella had not observed an inner apartment, ornamented with drawings and wooden-shelved book-cases, with a piano-forte in one corner, and a lute hung carelessly by a plaid ribbon upon a cane bottomed London cottage chair.

She had little doubt, however, but that the elder of the bonny bairns would suddenly, on discovery, arrive at the honor of being stiled my Lord Blackcattle, or some other title, and all our little female ragamuffins become Lady Janos and Lady Jessy's; a revolution by no means surprising in the annals of many a fair

creature's

creature's family, whose adventures she had read.

Miss Beauclerc resolved therefore to obtain a conference with the widow, and by insinuating herself with the softest compassion into her confidence, procure a disclosure of her secret history; and whilst she was revolving a plan to effect so desirable a point, without wounding the delicate feelings of the gentle cottager, Rosella repeated to Oberne, who had returned from his ramble, the good woman's lamentable situation, and the unfortunate event which had deprived her of her husband, and with him of the means of supporting life.

He had before heard the whole story, but would not interrupt her because he was enchanted with the impressive grace with which she told the tale—a grace he found irresistible, as he was assured from conviction, that it was not a well-acted energy of feeling, to veil over a cold and selfish heart.

Miss Beauclerc had not yet quite resumed the cordiality she had displayed to Oberne before the fracas at Dumbarton; but his good-humoured and almost unceasing attentions insensibly dispersed the cloud, and at supper, to which he was invited, it wholly vanished, when she discovered that he had dispatched an express to Dumbarton to procure wheaten bread, which was produced at the meal, where he knew both Rosella and herself ate little else.

This instance of delicate attention reinstated him fully in his former post of avowed escort to his fair companions, and on the next morning he acted as usual, as master of the ceremonies in regulating their voyage to the islands of the Loch. But Miss Beauclerc would not set out upon this expedition, delightful though the expectation

pectation of it was, until she had made her intended visit to her unfortunate *incognita*.

To the hut therefore she went; but after a very minute and useless exordium to induce the afflicted widow to repose her private sorrows in the faithful bosom of a new but tender and affectionate friend, she found, to her unspeakable disappointment, that the poor woman was actually no other than the wife of a peasant, whose father, instead of being the ennobled Lord of a fine old castle, containing a fine old skeleton, and a fine old mysterious manuscript, was no other than a wretched fisherman, who caught and cured herrings on the isle of Arran.

This being the case, for Miss Beauclerc had never read of a gentle unfortunate refusing her immediate confidence to the first-sight sympathy of a susceptible traveller, she contented herself with relieving her vulgar necessities, and leaving her to her fate; whilst the woman and her ten bairns were rendered comparatively rich from her contributions, those of Rosella, and the silent but liberal donation of Oberne.

At about eleven o'clock they took boat on the Lake, and the weather favoured their excursion. The first island they reached was Inchdavan, at the summit of whose highest rock even Miss Beauclerc mounted, invalid as she had been, to have a more perfect view of the scenery round her: here it was that Oberne felt jealous of the natural beauties of Scotland, and endeavoured to extort from his fellow-travellers an engagement to extend their tour to his native shores. But Miss Beauclerc, without immediately refusing his request, would not shackle herself by an absolute promise, and in this instance his rhetoric was ineffectual.

From

From Inchdavan they resumed their boat to strike across the Lake; but as they passed Inchmonger, Rosella was so much pleased with the appearance of industry and independence it exhibited, that Miss Beauclerc consented to land the refreshments with which the boat was stocked, and take them under a spreading tree upon the turf.

As they sat, she meditated very seriously upon the indecorum of returning to *terra-firma* without having encountered the least adventure, such as ought infallibly to befal every heroine, whenever she expects an aquatic expedition: and though her affection for Rosella forbade her even to wish that she should make the slightest experiment, by hazarding a false step, or throwing herself overboard in a start of fear, yet she thought it incumbent on her to try how far the evident attachment of Oberne would carry him—for swim or not, a lover should always plunge in, and dexterously bear a half-drowned angel, or even her sinking *chaperon* safe to shore, whilst the rest of the party are wringing their hands, and shrieking her funeral knell in hopeless anguish. However as such a perilous plan required a little consideration, Miss Beauclerc for the present contented herself with re-entering the boat, after their rural repast, with sufficient circumspection to avoid any disaster, deferring her meditated atchievment to a future opportunity.

As the party were proceeding to Ben Lomond, the Lake was suddenly overspread with a thick mist, that compelled them, much to their mortification, to return to shore, leaving the most pleasant part of the excursion for the next day.

At tea Miſs Beaclerc and her young companion again experienced the attention of Oberne, for their breakfaſt table in the morning had exhibited various ſtrong ſymptoms of the poverty of their hoſt: but Roſella, far from being gratified by the intereſt he took in their better accommodation, was chagrined and hurt at every inſtance of it which he diſplayed at ſo conſiderable an expence.

He had told her that half his eſtate was already diſſipated, and ſhe feared the other half would not long remain in his poſſeſſion. He had not indeed expreſsly ſaid that his income was ſmall, but he had ſpoken of it in ſo modeſt a ſtyle, that ſhe preſumed it was not an extenſive one; and of his improvidence his own narrative had given ſtrong inſtances.

She was vexed too on her own account: for it was natural to ſuppoſe he would not have been ſo anxious to continue in their ſociety at ſo high a tax upon his time and purſe, without ſome proſpect of compenſation, either by making himſelf an intereſt in her heart, or ſecuring the fortune of Miſs Beauclerc by a marriage upon prudential motives. But as the character of Oberne opened to her obſervation, ſhe could not allow herſelf to attribute to him any mercenary views, and ſhe was almoſt compelled to acknowledge, from a retroſpection of his conduct, that it appeared more probable ſhe was the ſecret object of his too thoughtleſs and expenſive gallantries. Yet as this was only conjecture, and might be far from the truth, ſhe endeavoured to continue towards him the ſame mode of behaviour ſhe had hitherto adopted. When Miſs Beauclerc retired however, for the night, Roſella having diſmiſſed Nancy, could not forbear repreſenting to her the increaſing

increasing uneasiness she sustained, from the perpetual expence into which Oberne plunged upon their account.

"I am far from approving it myself," replied Miss Beauclerc, "and though I cannot but be gratified by the tender attachment his conduct evinces, I will not suffer you, my dear Rosella, to bear the imputation of receiving attentions of a pecuniary nature from any man, however amiable. I have for some time," continued she thoughtfully, "been alarmed at the increasing passion of poor Oberne; because I fear it will not be in my power to reward it as my inclination directs, and therefore I wished him to tear himself away at this place; but his earnest solicitations to continue with us till we reach Perth, my compassion unhappily yielded to, in spite of rigid prudence."

"It is even so," thought Rosella: "Oberne pretends to be in love with her—what will Mr. Mordaunt say if she marries so young a man!"

"My poor Selina," added Miss Beauclerc, "has unconsciously treated my dilemma, by informing me, that through some channel she cannot discover, our adventure at Stanmore Hills has been mentioned to Mr. Mordaunt; nay even our alarm at Edinburgh and our meeting with Oberne, have been most cruelly misrepresented by some secret but well-informed enemy, who for a sinister purpose evidently watches all our motions."

Rosella had shuddered with all the horror of timid innocence, from the opprobium of the world; and now at the idea of a secret enemy, envenomed with hatred to a degree that could alone animate him to take such uncommon trou-

ble to injure them, ſhe felt her terrors riſe; her head became giddy, ſhe grew ſick, and after ſtruggling a few moments with the emotions, loſt all ſenſation.

The agony of Miſs Beauclerc at this unexpected effect of her ſublime communication, cannot be deſcribed: ſhe flew round the room in unreflecting anguiſh, wrung her hands, and ſcreamed for help. The houſe was ſmall, and her cries ſoon diſtinguiſhed. The firſt perſon who ruſhed into the apartment was Oberne, who, on beholding Roſella extended upon the floor, pale and without motion, exhibited as many ſymptoms of diſtraction as Miſs Beauclerc.

"What has happened?" exclaimed he. "Roſella, deareſt Roſella, are you ill?—— God of Heaven, ſhe is ſenſeleſs!"

By this time ſeveral people were collected at the room-door, and the woman of the houſe entered with Nancy.

"Send this moment," cried Oberne—— "where's Patrick, where's my ſervant?"

"The gentleman's in the kitchen," returned Nancy. "Oh Lord, poor dear Miſs Montreſor! that ever we ſhould have coomed to ſuch a place! They have poiſoned her with their dirt and filth!"

The landlady's red hair briſtled with reſentment at this affront, but ſhe was ſilent.

"Be quiet," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc angrily; "get ſome more water; ſtay——rub her hands!"

Oberne, with the rapidity of lightining, did both, and Roſella revived; not to thank him for his cares, but to turn from him with a repugnance, and a look of horror, as potent as that of a faſhionable lady, who unexpectedly beholds

beholds at the corner of St. James's-ſtreet, or any other ſtreet, a diſguſting picture of ſickneſs and famine cloſe at her well-turned elbow, imploring her to beſtow what ſhe does not poſſeſs—money, and endeavoring to excite what ſhe never felt—charity.

Miſs Beauclerc now reflected that it would be proper to diſmiſs Oberne, and ſhut the chamber-door. He entreated before he withdrew, that ſhe would ſend for advice if Miſs Montrefor continued indiſpoſed; and telling her that his ſervant, whom he had appointed to meet him at that place, was arrived, and wholly at her ſervice, enquired, with a look of ſolicitude, if Roſella had been alarmed.

"Yes," returned Miſs Beauclerc, in a heſitating accent; "no—not alarmed, but ſhe has been much ſhocked—that is—but I will inform you to-morrow."

Not at all ſatisfied with this broken intimation, he departed very reluctantly, to amuſe, if he could, his curioſity and concern with all the conjectures a lively imagination and apprehenſive mind could ſuggeſt. The ſervant of whom he had ſpoken, had brought him letters from Edinburgh, by no means ſo pleaſing or entertaining as he could have wiſhed—letters which reflected reproach upon his underſtanding, for ſuffering himſelf to be drawn into the lure of two travelling adventurers; a report then paſſing current, from a tolerably juſt detail his companions had repeatedly given of the playhouſe *rencontre*.

When Roſella had wholly recovered, and again found herſelf *téte-à téte* with her friend, ſhe implored her with all the eloquence her diſtreſs inſpired, no longer to ſuffer the attendance of Oberne.

"You

"You promised poor Simpson," added she, "to send him word when he should rejoin us: perhaps he is now able to follow you hither.—If we have enemies, which Heaven forbid, will they not remark upon your travelling so far without any attendant but Nancy? and indeed I have often wished, upon his account, to be informed of his situation, when I recollect how feeble and dispirited he appeared."

"I will send to him to join us at Perth," replied Miss Beauclerc: "but, my dear Rosella, if I retract the permission I have given Oberne to accompany us there, I must give him a reason for so doing; and to dissipate any mistaken idea of capricious coldness on my part, I believe it will be best to assign the true one; for I have now received such unequivocal proofs of his tenderness, that I would not occasion him an unnecessary pang."

"Would to Heaven," thought Rosella, "we had never seen him! How can my poor friend be so weak as to think of such nonsense, when her character, through his means, is so cruelly arraigned."

Again the humiliating sensation which the undesired society of Oberne had originally given her, recurred with increased force, and she resolved, not without a mixture of spleen in her prudence, that since Miss Beauclerc prized his boasted tenderness so as to prefer it to reputation, her presence should not often interrupt the expression of it, as she suspected it might hitherto have done.

Nay her ill-humour prompted anew the plan of writing to Mr. Mordaunt or her guardian, to propose her return to his house; but the recollection of its gloomy dulness, and of its master's economic lectures, joined to the shame

ſhame of encountering the regards of people, who no doubt had joined her name with that of Miſs Beauclerc in their condemning ſtrictures, made her haſtily abandon the idea.

She could not ſleep; and amongſt the mortifying reflections that aſſailed her during the long uneaſy night, the remembrance of her laſt *rencontre* with Mr. Delamere, his ſtrange manner, and ſtill more tormenting gift, haunted her recollection, and ſhe was tempted to believe that he was the author of the officious reports to her diſadvantage and that of Miſs Beauclerc: and to complete the chagrin ſhe experienced, ſhe imagined that if he had not received the note ſhe had been ſo careleſsly haſty in returning, he might further repreſent her as having ſolicited and received pecuniary favors from his compaſſion.

Theſe ſurmiſes baniſhed every favourable ſentiment ſhe had once entertained of him; and Oberne, who had never wounded her ſelf-love by ill-founded reproach the effect of appearances too ſeverely conſtrued, but had ever ſeemed to regard her with the reſpect ſhe coveted, was thought amiable by the contraſt; but he again forfeited her eſteem by aiming to gratify either a propenſity to ridicule or avarice, in the particular admiration ſhe ſuppoſed him to have avowed for Miſs Beauclerc.

Haraſſed and unrefreſhed, Roſella roſe in the morning, hating the idea of meeting Oberne, but not chuſing to awaken the alarm of her friend, by remaining in her chamber under pretext of indiſpoſition. Before ſhe deſcended to breakfaſt, he had twice enquired by Nancy if ſhe were quite recovered, and if he might hope to greet her in the ſitting-room; and ſhe wondered this aſſiduity did not occaſion

any

any diſpleaſure in his miſtreſs, who, on the contrary, appeared only deſirous to ſoften his anxiety.

At length Roſella attended the breakfaſt table, to which Miſs Beauclerc had previouſly adjourned, and as ſhe opened the door, ſhe heard her ſay—

"Enquire of herſelf—here ſhe is!"

"My dear Miſs Montreſor," cried Oberne, "you look pale; you are not quite well yet!"

"I feel rather indiſpoſed," ſaid Roſella, coldly, "and will requeſt Miſs Beauclerc to leave me here, whilſt you accompany her to the Lake."

"It is impoſſible we can leave you, "exclaimed he eagerly; "your friend I am ſure will defer the excurſion."

"Moſt certainly I ſhall," replied Miſs Beauclerc.

Roſella ſuffered the argument to drop; for ſhe was too languid to converſe, and too heart-ſick to care much what effect her ſilence would have. Oberne too, was far from being in his uſual ſpirits; but as they were in him conſtitutional, they appeared ſometimes by flaſhes, and it was only at intervals that he looked thoughtful and uneaſy.

After breakfaſt, Miſs Beauclerc declaring her intention of retiring for an hour or two to write letters, Roſella was careful to quit the room before ſhe left it; and then, without any inclination to occupy herſelf, ſhe ſat in her chamber, holding her aching temples, ſilent and ſolitary, until Nancy made her *entré*, in a moſt extraordinary flow of ſpirits, apparently brimful of intelligence, which without any ſolicitation ſhe ſoon began to pour out; and Roſella had the ſatisfaction of hearing that Mr. Patrick thought her exceedingly handſome, and did

did not wonder that his maſter ſlighted the London lady; for Mr. Patrick himſelf could never keep conſtant to an old ſweetheart whenever he ſaw a prettier.

"I do not wiſh to hear ſuch nonſenſe," ſaid Roſella, with ſome anger.

"Lorrk-a-mighty, Miſs!" exclaimed Nancy, "I never ſee you ſo croſs-grained before! I am ſure Mr. Patrick ſaid no harm, or I ſhould not have coomed to tell you—only he ſaid, his maſter's brother, Lord Clinking, or Clanking, or ſomewhat, was very angry that Mr. Oberne had left his ſweetheart, and that he had been told a heap of ſtories of his ſpending all his money upon good for-nought minxes all round the country of North Britain—God-a-mighty knows where that is! But I told Mr. Patrick I was glad he had coomed to ſee it was no ſuch thing, for his maſter had been with my ladies morning, noon, and night, as one may ſay, ever ſince they coomed from Edinburgh.

"Good God, how teaſing!" exclaimed Roſella.

"Lorrk no, Miſs," reſumed Nancy, "Mr. Patrick laughed fit to crack his ſides!"

Roſella now found her patience exhauſted, and deſired Nancy to leave the room, which the girl had ſcarcely done before ſhe burſt into a paſſion of tears, and imagining that the good opinion of the world was to her irretrievably loſt, gave herſelf up to deſpair. After having remained ſome time abſorbed in the moſt tormenting reflections, her ſolitude was interrupted by Miſs Beauclerc, who was terrified at the condition in which ſhe found her, and rightly gueſſing the cauſe of thoſe tears, whoſe traces were yet viſible in the pallid cheek of Roſella, ſhe eagerly promiſed to diſmiſs Oberne, and

reſtore her tranquillity by every means in her power.

Accuſtomed as Roſella had been to indulgence from her fanciful yet kind friend, ſhe was ſurpriſed at the important ſacrifice ſo readily made to her ſcruples—a ſacrifice ſhe had not however inſincerity or complaiſance enough to oppoſe by the faineſt conteſt, becauſe her delicacy ought, ſhe ſecretly thought, to have been ſeconded at leaſt, even if it had not been directed by her older companion :—ſhe therefare received the offer of Oberne's diſmiſſion with an emotion of thankfulneſs; and it was ſettled that Miſs Bleauclerc ſhould immediately intimate her intention of foregoing the pleaſure of his company after they quitted Luſs.

She deſcended to their ſitting-room to announce their approaching ſeparation, and found him in a mediation ſo profound, that ſhe was well aſſured his volatile ſpirits could only have ſuffered ſuch a revolution by the almighty power of heroic love. His firſt enquiry was for the health of Roſella, and his next for the ſubject of the alarm or ſhock ſhe had received the preceding evening, which he had not yet had an opportunity of learning.

"The cruel and unjuſt world," replied Miſs Beauclerc, with unuſual dignity, "is never ſo rigid as when a young, lovely, and innocent girl is arraigned before its tribunal."

Oberne ſtared at this comment, and his attention to the explanation of it redoubled.

"My timid Roſella," continued the lady, "is not equal to meeting its ſtern inquiſition or rebuke, and I would not wiſh her to combat its reproach, even with a placid conſcience for her auxiliary!"

"In

"In the name of God, my dear Madam, explain yourself!" exclaimed Oberne impatiently.

"To a man of delicacy," said Miss Beauclerc, "I have surely sufficiently explained my meaning; and you must comprehend enough of it not to be surprised if I decline very peremptorily the honor of your attendance from this hour!"

He made no reply to this heart-rending instance of cruelty, but appeared to reflect for a moment, and then darted out of the room with a participatien that half terrified and half delighted Miss Beauclerc, who waited a considerable time for the report of the pistol she concluded the disconsolate hero had gone in quest of; but hearing nothing of it, she was on the point of sallying out to enquire by what method the poor youth had slipped out of the world, and eluded the peculiar anguish of his fate, when her intention was suspended from surprise, occasioned by the most violent outcries, lamentations, and oaths uttered in a strong brogue, with supplications and adjuratious dancing on a Scotch dialect, accompanied by female shrieks, and these again interrupted by threats of future vengeance, independent of present punishment.

The last mentioned sound, though scarcely articulated from excessive rage, Miss Beauclerc fancied to proceed from the lips of the heart-broken Oberne, and what the uproar portended she was at a loss to guess: the solemnity of the present crisis could not long outbalance her vehement curiosity to learn it, and she repaired to the scene of contention, where she beheld the repulsed lover brandishing a whip instead of a sword, and Rosella, who from time to time car-

earneſtly conjured him to moderate his wrath, had only the power of mitigating the chaſtiſement he was inflicting upon a man, whoſe collar he graſped: whilſt Nancy wept bitterly, and tore her hair in concert with Mr. Patrick, the culprit, who ſeemed only intent upon ſtripping his head of its honors, and again applying to himſelf every villanous name his obliging maſter had before inveſted him him with.

A Scotch laſſie, who thought Mr. Patrick a vara bonny loon, was in her haſte to be attended to, bawling out a remonſtrance in the Erſe language, which Mr. Patrick comprehending, bade her hould her tongue, and not be after axing pardon for him, unleſs ſhe would firſt lend him a cord to hang himſelf a little, for being ſuch a d—m—d ſpalpeen to a better maſter tan ever croſſed the Channel.

Miſs Beauclerc conceiving this ſtrange affray to be beneath the interference of Roſella, and not perceiving any ſigns of its ending in a ſentimental tragedy, called to her to re-enter the houſe, for the ſcene lay in a yard, flanked on one ſide by the road, and on the other by a convenient horſe-pond, to which Oberne had almoſt dragged his ſelf-condemned priſoner.

But Roſella heard her not, and before the ſtorm was in the leaſt allayed, a very brilliant travelling chaiſe paſſed the road, followed by two or three others; and Miſs Beauclerc obeyed an impulſe of curioſity in endeavouring to diſcover who occupied the firſt, which had ſtopped before the little inn whilſt a ſervant made ſome enquiries, when a tumult of emotions was excited in her boſom, by diſcerning rather unexpectedly Lord Morteyne, ſeated by a very pretty woman, who was regarding

Roſella

Roſella with looks of concern and ſurpriſe, which his Lordſhip did not diminiſh by a narrative he was apparently giving of the object thus ſcrutinized.

"Oh my Lord," though Miſs Beauclerc, with a mixture of diſdain and exultation, "you likewiſe believe theſe calumniating ſtories of your once beloved Roſella! But though you imagine your horrible dereliction unknown to her, be aſſured you ſhall, like other raſh and jealous lovers, bitterly repent your ſhocking credulity."

This prophetic idea had ſcarcely croſſed her imagination before the carriages drove away, and Roſella remained wholly unconſcious that ſhe had been thus recognized by an old acquaintance.

By perſuaſion and intreaty ſhe at length induced Oberne to leave the offender to his own contrition, which he manifeſted by a variety of emotions; and his maſter in the firſt moment of returning reflection, aſhamed of having diſplayed ſuch a want of ſelf-controul, withdrew haſtily from the preſence of Roſella, who by compaſſionating the object of his vehement anger, more than tacitly condemned it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A parting Scene—a heroine's retreat champetre.

WHEN Roſella rejoined her friend, ſhe learned that a circumſtance had occurred to urge the continuation of their journey immediately, and wondered exceedingly what event of importance could have reached her in the ſpace of ten minutes; but recollecting how much her friend ſometimes amuſed her imagination with ſuppoſitious affairs, ſhe concluded it was one of thoſe fabulous exigences which had more than once in the courſe of their tour guided her motions.

Oberne meantime heard the order given for a chaiſe for the ladies, and ſtarting from his ſolitary trance, flew to enquire the reaſon of ſuch an unexpected precipitation: happening to encounter Roſella in his ſearch, he aſked with rapidity whither ſhe was going; and ſhe declared, with truth, that ſhe knew not."

"That is you do not wiſh to tell me. Are you going towards Perth?" reſumed he, after a moment's pauſe.

"I am

"I am entirely ignorant of the route Miſs Beauclerc means to take," replied ſhe, "but I believe not."

Again he re-urged his firſt queſtion, and ſhe made the ſame reply.

"Tell me at leaſt, ſaid Oberne. "the motive for this ſudden movement: it is, I ſuppoſe, in conſequence of the impertinence of that fellow, which reached you through Nancy?"

"Indeed you diſtreſs me," ſhe replied, be-"cauſe I cannot anſwer you!"

"Miſs Montreſor," exclaimed Oberne ſuddenly, "tell me with ſincerity the opinion you have formed of me. I know you think me a ſtrange mortal, incapable of reflecting ſeriouſly; fooliſh, extravagant in conduct and idea, giddy, fickle, impetuous, and unmeaning.

"If you know all this," ſaid Roſella, half ſmiling, "why do you apply to me? Will it be any ſatisfaction to have this idea of your's confirmed?"

"No; I ſhould, on the contrary, be charmed to find that my fears were unfounded."

"Well then I beg you to believe that they are; for I cannot yet think myſelf qualified by experience to form any deciſive judgment of your character."

"I ſuſpect," ſaid Oberne, "that hitherto I have not had any—at leaſt I find myſelf under the influence of a new character within a very limited time. To have done however with an unworthy ſubject, let me quit it to inform you, that I ſhall not oppoſe the promiſe Miſs Beauclerc condeſcended to make, to her preſent determination of diſcarding me, becauſe

becauſe I feel equally indignant with her at the odious imputation her generoſity and candid reliance upon me have drawn upon her—an imputation I ſhall aſſuredly endeavour to wipe off before I ſee you again. And now, dear Miſs Montreſor, let me entreat that you will forgive the ſhock that fellow's inſolence and folly, and the ſilly prattle of Nancy have occaſioned you; and believe that from the firſt hour I ſaw you, I have not for a moment entertained an opinion I would not freely avow to your moſt zealous champion. Miſs Beauclerc does me injuſtice in affecting to hide from me the route ſhe means to take; I have too much reſpect for you and her to diſcover it without her permiſſion; but as I am fortunately acquainted with her Engliſh reſidence, I will not deſpair of being able to renew the pleaſure I have enjoyed in your ſociety, with a better recommendation to your favor than idleneſs and aſſurance, You will be next winter ſtill under her protection I hope?"

"I cannot decide for myſelf," returned Roſella; "my ſtay with Miſs Beauclerc depends upon her invitation, and the indulgence of my guardian."

"Your guardian! I ſuppoſed—I thought you—excuſe me, dear Miſs Montreſor, if I take the liberty of enquiring if he is the guardian of your perſon alone, or your fortune likewiſe?"

"Of both," replied ſhe, wondering where theſe enquiries would end.

"Then I have been in an error," ſaid Oberne gravely; "to deal frankly with you. I imagined you to be as deſtitute of fortune as you abound in every amiable quality."

"Am

"Am I to ſuppoſe then," ſaid Roſella, rather indignantly, "that ſuch a circumſtance has influenced your conduct?"

"Certainly had I been better informed, I ſhould not have followed you from Edinburgh."

"Followed *me!*" interrupted ſhe, ſtill more irritated, "do you ſay you followed me?"

"Yes, I have the preſumption to ſay it; I ſhould not have been abſent from Edinburgh twelve hours, had you not accompanied Miſs Beauclerc." Be not, however, angry—I acknowledged to you that I had diſſipated half my fortune, not very ſplendid originally, and with the other half I would have offered you my unworthy ſelf, had you been at liberty to encourage or reject me, and had you not been above my hopes; as it is, I muſt bid you adieu, with the additional mortification of feeling thoſe wiſhes cruſhed which I have for ſome time paſt fooliſhly cheriſhed."

Without waiting her anſwer, he left the room; and Roſella, from ſurpriſe and confuſion, had not the power of preventing him, that ſhe might explain from mere humility, that he carried with him an erroneous ſuppoſition, if he imagined the fortune ſhe had ſpoken of even approached to mediocrity. She ran to the window in the hope of ſeeing him paſs it, but he had wholly vaniſhed; and Miſs Beauclerc calling to her almoſt immediately, to enquire if ſhe were ready, ſhe haſtened to obey the intimation, and followed her into the chaiſe a few minutes after, without again beholding the eccentric Oberne, whoſe abſence ſhe had ſo often wiſhed, and now almoſt regretted.

Nancy

Nancy was ſtill ſobbing at intervals, and ſecretly deploring that her too flippant tongue had cauſed, as ſhe imagined, two ſuch great diſaſters as the diſgrace of Mr. Patrick, and the parting of Miſs Roſella from her true lover; for ſuch ſhe conſidered Oberne. And her diſcontent was increaſed by an attack which had been made upon her by the landlady, who had plainly hinted that ſhe would ſcorn to ſerve people who did not know their own minds; for her part, if ſhe had known the leddies were going away, ſhe might have had a great Laird and aw his family at her hooſe, which would have made the fortune of her and her guide mon.

Miſs Beauclerc ſat immerſed in the ſublimity of thoſe adventures, ſhe was now purſuing with an avidity, that would not allow her leiſure to finiſh her ſurvey of the beautiful Lake ſhe had ſo much deviated out of her road to ſee; and ſo rapidly did her ideas hurry her forward, that ſhe could not even ſpare one look of approbation at the romantic ſcenery ſhe was ſo eager to quit, but fixed her eyes upon the trotting hoofs of the galloways that bore her away, calculating how ſoon ſhe ſhould leave behind her Loch Lomond and its charming iſlands, and the lovely vale of Tarbet, with its eaſtern boundary of water.

Roſella had therefore full liberty to purſue her own reflections, which led her to examine the previous conduct of her friend, and the ſtrange unpleaſant ſituations which had been the reſult of it; and ſo far was ſhe then from deploring the injuſtice of the world, that ſhe could not but acknowledge, thoſe reports which had reached her ear, were but the natural

tural inferences to be drawn from a mode of acting so singular and unaccountable. She became, in consequence, anxious to learn whither the whimsical genius of her friend would point; and without any preface, made an enquiry into their present destination.

Miss Beauclerc replied that she had not any settled plan, but having much curiosity to behold the Grampian mountains, she should journey in the direction they took.

Rosella perceiving some reserve in her manner whilst she returned this vague answer, suspected an achievement *in petto*, which she was not yet to be made acquainted with, and looked forward to it with apprehension and anticipated disgust. She conceived that to hesitate taking any step at the present moment, however unpleasant, to rescue herself from the malicious sneers of those, who having already learned their adventures, and poured them with cruel comments into the ear of Mr. Mordaunt, a man whose esteem and friendship she highly prized, would be to deserve and wait for further opprobrium: and in spite of the innate affection she still retained for Miss Beauclerc, she resolved to give up the pleasing expectations she had lately found so little realized in her society, and voluntarily return to dulness and discord, as an asylum from censure.

When they rested for the night, she preferred her claim to the offered advice of her old and sage friend, through the channel of a letter, written without the knowledge of Miss Beauclerc; but she could not send it off until they stopped at some town for a few days, that she might have a chance of receiving an answer. She deprecated the opinion Mr. Mordaunt might

might form of her, from not receiving any appeal to his kindneſs, after he had heard ſuch a detail of her journey, as Mrs. Ellinger had tranſmitted an account of to Miſs Beauclerc, of whom Roſella ſpoke without diſreſpect, though ſhe acknowledged that the reports in circulation, however cruelly exaggerated or miſrepreſented the circumſtance might be to which they related, were yet not wholly without foundation: ſhe then entreated his aid to extricate her from her preſent ſituation, without offending Miſs Beauclerc, or wounding that affection which had induced her to beſtow favors and benefits, ſhe could never think of without the warmeſt gratitude.

This epiſtle Roſella reſerved very carefully to the moment when ſhe might put it into a poſt with a chance of catching the wiſhed-for reply; and as her mind was rather calmed after having decided upon a ſtep ſo prudent, ſhe found herſelf ſufficiently diſengaged to remark upon the uncommon enthuſiaſm which had taken poſſeſſion of her ſtrange and romantic friend, who compared the Grampian hills to the Alps, the Appenines, and the Pyrenees; and the river Tay, with its diſtant Loch, to each ſublime ſtream of which ſhe had ever read.

Their progreſs was ſlow, for the road was hilly and mountainous; but the almoſt inſufferable tedioufneſs of every aſcent, was amply rewarded by a view of the intervening vales, ſweetly wild, almoſt invariably watered by a winding ſtream, and generally well wooded.

In one of theſe, about five miles ſouth of Dunkeld, Miſs Beauclerc loitered near an hour,

hour, taking the dinner ſhe had had the precaution to provide at the laſt town, at the foot of a mountain, down whoſe rocky boſom a natural caſcade fell into the Tay, which circuited round a ſmall but pleaſant wood, to viſit the ſpot, and receive the falling tribute into its own waves.

"I ſhould much like," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "to paſs a few weeks in this lovely ſpot; but I fear I ſhall not here meet with a cottage to ſuit my purpoſe."

"All thoſe I have hitherto obſerved," replied Roſella, "are really not ſo good as Engliſh piggeries: a cottage in the environs of London, fitted up with French windows, treillage paper, and cane chairs, and a cottage at the foot of the Grampian hills, are very different things I perceive."

"Perhaps we may have the good fortune," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc with a ſmile, "to find the deſerted habitation of ſome elegant recluſe, whoſe taſte and labours may have rendered it preciſely what a delicate and cultivated mind might wiſh."

Roſella made no reply, but ſincerely hoped they might not fall into the track of any elegant recluſe, who had been capable of executing ſo mad a ſcheme.

Miſs Beauclerc at length condeſcended to reſume her journey, and proceeded to Dunkeld, where ſhe ſlept; and on the next morning at an early hour ſent to the houſe of a perſon in the place, with whom ſhe ſaid ſhe had buſineſs; and her note was immediately anſwered by the appearance of an obſequious North Britain, who was, he affirmed, the vara parſon Maſter Mac-clood had mentioned to the leddy, and after a few compliments, and many profeſſions

of

of devotion to the intereſt of ſic aimable parſonages, he proceeded, as a matter of courſe, to deſcribe the moſt charming dwelling in the whole iſland; a delectful cottage, only two ſitting rooms and a ſmall kitchen below, and three lodging rooms above, but vara taſtefully fitted up and furniſhed by an unfortunate leddy, who was prevented from finding it the aſylum ſhe had hoped for herſelf and her children, by the folly of a jealous loon of a huſband, who made her quit her ain coontra, and follow him to another, whither he was baniſhed by his ain extravagance and diſſipation. The praſpeects were the moſt romantic in aw Scotland, and it was not more than twa miles from the rumbling brig, a majeſtic caſcade as ony in Europe. An Edinburgh painter had taken views to the extent of five miles round, which views were hung up in the cottage; and it likewiſe contained a piano-forte, and ſundry inſtruments particulareeſed in the leeſt of the furniture and appurtenances.

"I am perfectly ſatisfied with this account of my future reſidence," interrupted Miſs Beauclerc; "I have already inſtructed my agent in London to pay the ſum demanded, and I hear that I can have immediate poſſeſſion."

"Maiſter Mac-clood," the Scot replied, "had deſired him to accede to the leddy's wiſhes in that reſpect, and ſhe might act as ſhe thought proper as to inſtant reſidence; and even if any thing intervened to prevent the agreement from taking place, of which he hoped there wad be leetel probabeelity, ſhe, as a tenant, might ſotisfee ony demand of the landleddy, by the year or the quarter."

Miſs

Miſs Beauclerc was evidently delighted with this prompt method of proceeding, and after ſettling a few neceſſary preliminaries, ſhe departed the next morning from Dunkeld with Roſella and Nancy, accompanied by Maiſter Crauford, who undertook to eſcort them to the Scotch paradiſe he had ſo eloquently deſcribed. Yet Roſella had ſo little expectation of ſatisfaction from it, that ſhe dated her letter, with a memorandum that the reply was to be addreſſed to her at the houſe of Mr. Crauford, who was to receive and forward the correſpondence of Miſs Beauclerc, and then contrived to ſend it to the poſt before ſhe left the town, with a ſincere hope that Mr. Mordaunt would comply with the wiſh it contained.

After a ſhort ride through a country, which it required no ingenuity of the Scot to perſuade the ladies was beautifully romantic, he pointed out to Miſs Beauclerc her new abode, and ſhe found it to exceed even what her enthuſiaſtic imagination had formed of divine. It was now the beginning of July, and the weather which in the Scottiſh highlands was then little more than of a pleaſurable warmth, had given fragrance to the herbage, and ſcented the air for a conſiderable diſtance with the ſhrubs and wild flowers tranſplanted from a more ſouthern ſoil, and diſpoſed with conſiderable judgment in a lovely glen, where a branch of the Tay meandered in ſtillneſs, until it was joined by a brawling ſtream that ruſhed from a neighbouring rock, and then they flowed together with an impetuous motion, and ſhook the freſhened air with their murmurs.

The cottage itſelf had been newly white-waſhed, and partially gliſtened from behind a green treillage covering the front and one ſide,

and

and placed about half a foot from the building, that the dews hanging upon the leaves of the wild roſe and honeyſuckle creeping over it, might not affect the apartments with damp; the windows were caſements, but very neatly glazed and leaded, and reflected very brightly the ſun-beam darted againſt them; and a rural portico open to the inſpection of the paſſing obſerver, diſcovered a little greenhouſe, fancifully arranged with pots of flowers, ſo as to reſemble a luxuriant arbour.

To the north, the cottage was ſheltered by a gentle aſcent, covered with a grove of firs, interſperſed with beech; and though the rays of the riſing ſun could ſalute it from the eaſt, yet its wintry blaſts were intercepted by the angle of the wood, which terminated by degrees, till at length a few ſcattered trees alone ſhaded the plain, and waved their branches in lofty pride over the reflecting boſom of the river.

Miſs Beauclerc was ſpeechleſs with delight, and Roſella with admiration; and with ſenſations widely different from the methodical apathy of their guide, Mr. Craufurd, liſtened or ſeemed to liſten to his commendation of the perfect repair of the houſe: he obſerved that the thatched roof was of reeds, and very durable—indeed it would laſt as long as he did; that the chimnies had not been built more than three months, and were conſtructed with an equal attention to ſtrength and convenience, as well as adapted to the ſimplicity of the building.

He made the ladies remark a well, which the landlady had been at a conſiderable expence to clear of weeds and rubbiſh, and ſo conveniently ſituated, that the laſſie inſtead of running every hour with her pitcher to the river, would get a bucket of water in two minutes:

he

he uſhered them in at the back door, that they might behold a little poultry-yard and fuel ſhed, and a pig-ſty, the whole being part and parcel of the building.

But Miſs Beauclerc was paying much greater attention to a pretty entrance contrived from a little flower-garden on the ſouth ſide: it was formed like a lean-to, having a ſloping roof of rough branches of trees overlaid with ruſhes; the wall was raiſed with lath and plaiſter, lined in the inſide with a paper to repreſent a ruſtic railing, overrun with flowering weeds and high graſs, and the floor was paved irregularly with ſmall pebbles. It led to a little ſtudy, or muſic-room, for it was both the one and the other, being decorated on every ſide with light caſes of painted deal, filled with books elegantly bound; and in a receſs ſtood the piano-forte Mr. Craufurd had ſpoken of, of a ſmall ſize, adapted to the ſituation it filled. Beneath it Roſella, who followed her friend in mute wonder, ſaw a viola and two more inſtruments in caſes, which ſhe afterwards learned were a lute and an Æolian harp.

"An aſylum for an unfortunate lady and her children!" repeated ſhe internally, as Mr. Craufurd's explanation roſe to her recollection. "Good God! if this was the unfortunate lady's idea of an economical retreat, I do not wonder that the unfortunate gentleman her huſband, was baniſhed from his native land by the diſſipation of his property!"

Mr. Craufurd was now attending to the ſafe diſpoſal of the baggage, for which he had not only engaged the aſſiſtance of Nancy, but had dragged a Scotch ſervant-girl from the hole ſhe had fled to, at the approach of ſuch magnificent perſonages.

Miſs Beauclerc, relieved therefore from his tireſome obſervations, fully ſatisfied her curioſity and expectation, by ſurveying every apartment with rapturous avidity. The deſigns of the Edinburgh painter were in the room adjoining the ſtudy, into which it opened; and when Miſs Beauclerc entered it, ſhe would certainly have honored it with the appellation of a drawing-room, had not the faſcinating epithet of *the cottage* recurred to her; and ſhe then reflected that there was no ſuch place in a captivating retreat of that kind. She contented herſelf with calling it ſimply a ſitting-room, whilſt ſhe admired the elegant neatneſs of the furniture, the charming lightneſs of the paper, and the excellent effect of the beautiful views hung over it, which ſhe reſolved however to diſplace as faſt as poſſible, and ſubſtitute the copies Roſella was inſtantly to ſet about, becauſe all heroines in ſuch a ſituation ſhould be artiſts.

The cabriole chairs and ottomane to ſuit the furniture, and the carpet, which actually ſeemed to be the ſame on which the "hare-bell and violet grew," claimed each a ſhare of approbation; but all applauſe was faint, to that beſtowed upon the effect of the portico, which by means of a ſtained-glaſs door thrown open, became part of the room: its fragrance "ſtole o'er the ſenſes like the ſweet ſouth upon a bed of violets," and every vivid hue that varies the beautiful boſom of Nature under a ſouthern ſun, peeped from the ſhading folds of a drapery hanging in careleſs feſtoons round the entrance; it did not however, either than the arrangement of the green-houſe-plants, exclude a perſpective view of the country, equally wild, but far more intereſting than the ſubjects of Salvator's pencil.

"This

"This is surely a fairy scene!" exclaimed Rosella, after a long interval of silence.

Miss Beauclerc made no reply, for her admiration and content were too potent for speech; but she smiled at the emotions of her young companion, who continued to express her astonishment.

"What invisible being," said she, "has thus prepared every thing for our reception? These flowers are newly placed here, and the plants, far from drooping for want of care, have not even a single grain of dust upon their leaves!"

Mr. Craufurd at this moment entered the room, begging leave to introduce to the lady of the mansion a Scotch lassie, who was very ambitious of the honor of continuing at her post as drudge in ordinary, scowerer of kettles and pans, pig-feeder, faggot-chopper, poultry-killer, hands and knees floor-scrubber, and had no objection to take her turn at digging in the garden when necessary.

So many accomplishments centering in one person were not to be overlooked, and Miss Beauclerc very readily assented to the humble petition of Menie Cameron, who was installed into her service in due form: but as Mr. Craufurd's wife was well acquainted with the extent of her abilities, she had now, as it was usual with her when her husband left Dunkeld to examine the progress of the workmen at the cottage, taken the precaution to send a dinner with him, upon which the whole party made a tolerable meal.

Miss Beauclerc then having written out a list of things that appeared immediately necessary to her establishment, gave it to the obliging Maister Craufurd, and commissioned

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

him to ſeek in Dunkeld for a lad whom ſhe could ſend thither whenever ſhe found occaſion. The gentleman promiſed the ſwifteſt compliance with her requeſts, and departed before the evening cloſed in, leaving the travellers in poſſeſſion of their new dwelling.

When he was gone, Miſs Beauclerc propoſed to Roſella to walk round her little domains, which was readily agreed to; and they rambled over a ſmall kitchen-garden, another encloſure dedicated to flowers and ſhrubs, and a young plantation of no great extent, but prettily laid out, and in good order. Mr. Craufurd had obviated the ſurpriſe this might have occaſioned, by informing the ladies that he had ſent for a young man from Edinburgh to take proper care of the pleaſure-ground; and as he happened to be acquainted with the gardener of a Nobleman's ſeat in the neighbourhood, he had bought the exotics at a ſmall expence, and placed them as the taſte of his more experienced friend directed.

Miſs Beauclerc and her companion proceeded through the eaſtern extremity of the grove they had admired from the cottage-windows, and coming immediately upon a hill beyond it, they endeavoured to attain the ſummit before the ſun had wholly ſet, that they might better ſurvey the extent and features of the country.

"Roſella," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, as ſhe leaned upon her arm, "you appear diſpirited: do you imagine that our retreat is too much ſecluded from the world? Yet I am much deceived if you have not too much taſte to regret quitting its noiſy pleaſures for ſuch a retirement as this. For myſelf, I can aver that in your ſociety I could not think any ſolitude irkſome;

irkſome; would but my Roſella cloſe my eyes with her wonted tenderneſs, and weep over my grave with filial affection, I could die in this ſpot, and never ſend a ſigh towards the tumultuous and giddy crowd upon whom I now turn my back."

Roſella could not but overlook the ſublimity of this declaration from the fondneſs which was mixed with it, and ſhe felt anew the remorſe ariſing from a ſecret conſciouſneſs of ingratitude, which whiſpered to her, that to add her implied cenſure with the indiſcriminating cry of the world againſt her friend, was cruel. She was unable to anſwer the enquiry of Miſs Beauclerc with the cheerfulneſs ſhe had intended, and burſting into tears, remained ſilent.

The good lady, not in the leaſt ſuſpecting the ſource of this emotion, concluded that Roſella regretted alone in the world, one individual, to whom ſhe was herſelf anxious to unite her; and in a ſhort ſentence tenderly chiding her tears, ſhe ſuffered them to ſubſide without further notice.

When they reached the ſummit of the hill, Roſella forgot her ſelf-reproaches in the ſcene that opened before her; a few paces from them was a fence that appeared like a park-paling, and a herd of deer darting in wild terror from a clump of trees at the approach of the intruders, confirmed the ſuppoſition. The encloſure was far from being a level broken only by gentle aſcents; on the contrary, it was interſperſed with abrupt and rude craggy rocks, the tops of which were thinly covered with ruſſet and heath in bloom; but the low land was more verdant, better wooded, and winded with the ſtream that bent its fickle courſe through the dale. In the bed of the river

aroſe

aroſe a building reſembling a tower, upon whoſe mouldering turrets ſome ravens waved at intervals their ſooty wings, and took flight for their more airy dwelling in the talleſt branches of the neighbouring trees.

"What can that place be meant for?" exclaimed Roſella, unwilling to avow that ſhe ſuſpected it to be a priſon. At the inſtant however that ſhe ſpoke, ſhe obſerved, not a great way from the place, a modern pavilion, gay, light, and Grecian, but ill according with its ancient neighbour, which looked grim and ſullen upon the upſtart that obſcured its long ſtanding beauties.

"I ſhould like to know," reſumed ſhe, without waiting an anſwer to her firſt queſtion, "to whom this park and thoſe buildings belong."

"We will enquire," returned Miſs Beauclerc: "and if the family is abſent, moſt probably we may obtain leave of the houſe-keeper to ſee the manſion, which is not far off, I ſuppoſe, and through her medium perhaps, have leave likewiſe to wander over theſe grounds whenever our inclination and their wild beauties may impel us to wiſh it."

Roſella did not much approve of theſe *wandering* plans; for though ſhe did not imagine the habitation could be much frequented by its owners, in ſo retired a ſpot, yet if Fortune ſhould ordain that any part of the family unexpectedly viſited it, and found Miſs Beauclerc and herſelf, or either ſeparately, in quiet poſſeſſion of the beſt ſitting-room in the houſe, or *wandering* extremely at their eaſe in the grounds, ſhe thought ſhe could not feel quite ſo *nonchalente* as a charming heroine ſhe had lately read of in an admired novel, who was ſurpriſed by the young unmarried owner of a magnificent Welch manſion,

manſion, in which, by favour of Mrs. Houſe-keeper, ſhe had liberty to *wander* to her heart's content, and then took advantage of a ſhower of rain to *feel compelled* to ſit down *tête-à-tête* with my Lord, to drink a comfortable diſh of tea, not forgetting however, to diſplay afterwards all the horror of the ſublimeſt delicacy, becauſe the daring youth was unfeeling enough to ſtumble againſt her ideas of decorum.

As Miſs Beauclerc and Roſella leaned againſt the paling, ſurveying with a parting look the ſcenery it encloſed, they heard diſtinctly the tremendous roar of the cataract Mr. Craufurd had mentioned; and as twilight ſtole over every object round them, they liſtened with an emotion not wholly unmixed with fear, and thought of their retreat with yet more ſatisfaction, as their imagination repreſented it as a place of ſafety and an aſylum.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

An ungracious houſekeeper at an old caſtle—a deciſive meeting.

NANCY having with ſome difficulty found a ſmall repoſitory of candles, ſupplied her Lady with lights on her return; for Menie had vaniſhed without any previous notice; and having been abſent more than an hour, occaſioned ſome alarm in the Northumbrian, who concluded that ſhe had been dragged down a precipice by ſnme haggard witch, and that ſhe and her miſtreſs would never more get a glimpſe of the unlucky girl, excepting indeed in the unwelcome accoutrements of a winding-ſheet, ſaucer-eyes, and marble hands.

Menie returned however, in about an hour, and having on her entrance received a reprimand from Nancy, for giving her ſuch an alarm, ſhe ſaid ſhe had only been to the Laird's, to ſet Sawney's heart at reſt, by the information that her gude leddy wad not part wi her: an excuſe the other thought all-ſufficient.

The ſupper was quite a ruſtic one; but alas! it was ſerved up alſo in a moſt ruſtic ſtyle, but ill ſuited to the place in which it was eaten.—Nancy, at the requeſt of her Lady, had undertaken the office of cook; and her ſkill was not entirely deſpicable, becauſe ſhe had more than

than once taken the poſt of honor by a kitchen fire; but it was not now diſplayed to much advantage, for want of implements and materials to exerciſe it upon. Mr. Craufurd had indeed promiſed to return early the next morning, with every thing that was moſt urgently wanted; and Miſs Beauclerc was obliged to wait with compoſure for the time, when the exquiſite and well-managed meals of a cap-a-pie heroine ſhould grace her cottage table.

Roſella, in ſpite of the novelty of her ſituation—a novelty which appeared to have nothing unpleaſant in it, was far from being at eaſe: ſhe had heard the ingenuous reaſon aſſigned by Menie for her abſence, and feared this Laird, of whom ſhe ſpoke, might induce Miſs Beauclerc to drop her plan of total ſolitude, and furniſh thoſe enemies ſhe acknowledged to have, with freſh cauſe for cenſure and ſcandal.

After breakfaſt the following morning letters were to be written to Selina, to relieve her friendly heart with intelligence of their ſafety and their arrival, at the moſt lovely retirement in the world: aed Roſella declining at that moment, the opportunity of addreſſing vows of everlaſting affection to Miſs Livia, and of giving her a glowing portrait of every ſhelf in the cottages, followed the advice of Miſs Beauclerc, and walked out for exercife.

As the way ſhe had taken the evening before was the only one with which ſhe was at all acquainted, ſhe purſued it again, and arrived at the park-paling without having encountered a ſingle being. The old building again preſenting its heavy ſides to her view, ſhe was deſirous to have a nearer ſight of it, and jumping over the fence, which was very low, advanced towards the river, but felt at every ſtep that ſhe

was an interloper, and pictured to herself the Laird, such a figure as she had seen Wallace, the northern hero, described by a Scots painter, emerging from behind every bush she passed, to demand her business in his territories. And a figure did indeed accost her with a bow, but not so fierce looking a warrior.

This personage appeared like a gamekeeper, and Rosella thought he looked like a South Britain. Feeling that some apology was necessary for her intrusion, yet not knowing how to form one, she said, in a hesitating accent, that she was a stranger to the place, but had not entered it with any sinister design.

"Oh Miss," replied the man, "my Lord does not wish nor desire any person whatsoever, to be *discluded* from our park."

He had grounded the fowling-piece which had been carried on his shoulder, as if he meant to hold a long conversation; and Rosella finding that he expected to be asked a few questions, pointed to the mansion house, which she had just discovered from between the trees, and enquired who was the owner of it.

"My Lord, Miss, as owns this onaccountable park as it's called—my Lord Morteyne," replied he.

Rosella was vexed: "Lord Morteyne!" repeated she to herself; "so, we are again his neighbours! Surely Miss Beauclerc could not be acquainted with the circumstance; if he should happen to visit this house whilst we remain in the neighbourhood, he may suppose that we removed hither to attract his attention!"

This idea was so distressing, that she had no longer any regret at having written to Mr. Mordaunt;

Mordaunt; and bidding the gamekeeper good morning, ſhe walked back to the cottage, which had now loſt every charm in her imagination, ſhe had originally allowed it to poſſeſs. That Miſs Beauclerc ſhould have ſo ſuddenly heard of a purchaſe thus ſingularly to ſuit her ideas, ſhe now thought a ſuſpicious circumſtance, and ſhe recollected even to have ſeen ſeveral letters from her fanciful friend addreſſed to that Mr. Mac-cloud, of whom his countryman Mr. Craufurd had ſpoken.

She found that Miſs Beauclerc had not yet finiſhed her journaliſed epiſtle to her Selina, and as ſhe waited her leiſure to communicate the news ſhe had juſt heard, it occurred to her, that Mr. Mordaunt would moſt probably attend to her petition, before any *adventure* could poſſibly happen to make her rue this unlucky vicinity; and ſhe likewiſe confeſſed to herſelf, that as Miſs Beauclerc had actually concluded the purchaſe of the cottage, it could not be expected that ſhe would abandon it ſolely in complaiſance to her ſcruples.

Theſe reflections calmed the perturbation, with which ſhe had in the firſt moment, ſought to make her friend participate in her vexation; and Roſella had recovered ſufficient coolneſs before ſhe rejoined her, to mention her diſcovery without much emotion.

Miſs Beauclerc endeavoured to hear it with ſymptoms of extreme ſurpriſe, and was ſo much occupied in acting her own part, that ſhe loſt the opportunity of learning from the undiſguiſed countenance and manner of her young companion what effect this *accidental* and *unexpected* circumſtance had upon her mind. It has been very amply diſcuſſed in the journal juſt written to Selina, and much aſtoniſhment had been

been expreſſed that Lord Morteyne had not yet arrived, which had been fully expected from the *rencontre* at Luſs.

Roſella could not but perceive that her friend felt no diſpleaſure from what ſhe had heard, and auguring nothing good from the conjecture that followed, began to calculate how long it might be before Mr. Mordaunt received and anſwered her letter, when her reflections, and thoſe into which Miſs Beauclerc had fallen, were interrupted by the entrance of Nancy, who enquired if the young man who took care of the garden could be admitted to ſpeak to his Lady.

"Certainly, let him enter, replied the Padrona, ſtarting from her reverie; and a ſandy-haired, raw-boned, high-cheeked, thick-lipped, wide-mouthed, freckled, awkward Scotchman made his appearance, ſo unlike thoſe rural ſwains of comely mould, who falling in love with the heroine's ſimple but pretty waiting-damſel, form ſuch charming epiſodes in their hiſtories, that Miſs Beauclerc, entirely diſappointed, reſolved he ſhould not remain long in her ſervice, notwithſtanding his taſte in diſpoſing her flowers, and his evident care of her garden. Luckily however for poor Maclean, ſhe recollected whilſt he was making his bow, and expreſſing his hopes that ſhe was ſatisfied with his ſervices, that Nancy's arrangement might be made from the houſehold of Lord Morteyne, which would accommodate the difficulty in a very clever and uſeful manner—ſo that ſhe replied to his compliment with great condeſcenſion, and announced to him, that his good fortune was equal to that of Menie, in being retained through Mr. Craufurd's recommendation, and his own diligence.

She

She then enquired the name of a plant in the portico, with which both Roſella and herſelf were unacquainted, and learned that Maclean had heard, but forgotten it; but he promiſed to aſk his gude friend my Lord's gardener, who had let him have it from the greenhouſe at Guiardy.

Miſs Beauclerc having demanded if he meant the adjoining houſe and park, received the expected affirmative, and aſked what eſtabliſhment his Lordſhip kept up there. He did not know exactly; but it had lately been increaſed, and every thing put in order, in expectation of the Lord's arrival: and it was ſaid his Lordſhip was come to Scotland after a young lady he was going to be married to, and the houſekeeper was in hopes he would bring his bride to Guiardy, for they had heard it was not very far from where the lady lived.

Miſs Beauclerc liſtened with the utmoſt eagerneſs to this recital, which might perhaps have cruſhed all her long cheriſhed hopes, had ſhe not been entirely convinced that the young lady thus mentioned was only—could only be Roſella. This reaſonable ſuppoſition compoſed a certain horror ſhe had involuntarily begun to feel; and finding that Maclean had nothing further to communicate, ſhe diſmiſſed him.

Roſella entertained no ſuch idea; and the news of Lord Morteyne's marriage reconciled her in part, to the *rencontre* ſhe imagined it almoſt impoſſible to avoid if he were to viſit the Park, as any known engagement to another woman would leſſen the ſuſpicions his family or himſelf might form, on ſeeing her tranſported, without any apparent cauſe or neceſſity, from Avelines to the environs of Guairdy.

When

When Maclean retired, Nancy entered with a very grave face, to enquire what was to be done for victuals, as Mr Craufurd had not ſent the eatables, he was commiſſioned to convey, by the lad he was to procure at Dunkeld.

Miſs Beauclerc was extremely ſhocked at ſo groſs a queſtion, applied too at ſuch a moment, and ſent the poor girl out of the room with a more ſerious air of anger than ſhe had ever before beheld on the countenance of her lady. But alas! Roſella likewiſe, who was young and healthy, was ſo ſhamefully different from other heroines, that a walk generally gave her an inclination for dinner, and ſometimes even before the uſual hour. She had breakfaſted at eight, upon the tea and bread Mrs. Craufurd had furniſhed the houſe with, for the occaſional accommodation of her huſband, and it was now paſt two, ſo that ſhe very much commiſerated the diſtreſs of Nancy; and in ſpite of the charms of a cottage, ſituated amidſt the Grampian hills, near the winding Tay, ſhe had reaſon to think there were likewiſe ſome attractives in a dinner, now that ſhe was in evident danger of paſſing a day without one. Yet Nancy's diſgrace prevented her from imparting ſuch degenerate ſentiments to her friend; and at about three o'clock the envoy arrived from Maiſter Craufurd, leading a packhorſe loaded to a height more than equal to his own, which was about that of a greyhound.

Menie ran out with great alacrity to help the beaſt in with his burthen, and almoſt deliberated whether ſhe ſhould not carry both the one and the other into the poultry yard. But Nancy meantime took a ſafer method, and equally expeditious, by unlading the poney as it deliberately

rately marched forward; and having discovered where the provisions were deposited, she drew forth the basket that contained them, and fled to her rural kitchen with the spoil, calling to Menie to follow her without delay.

The dinner in about an hour and a half was served up, at a time but ill suited to the simplicity of rural life; the other circumstances attending it accorded better with what might be expected in humble dwellings: but Miss Beauclerc had never read of a heroine being compelled to rise from table to rince her own glasses, call for a napkin to wipe the dust from her plate, or take up her salt with a table spoon; all this discomposed her exceedingly, for such a minutia had not even entered her head, when she had devoured, in delighted admiration, those scenes so often described, of charming young ladies retiring from the world, and taking up their abode at the cottage of some honest peasant, whose infirm wife and awkward daughter form the whole train of domestics the lovely creature can boast of.

Miss Beauclerc's present dissatisfaction led her to reflect upon the innumerable dilemmas of those matronly heroines, brought forward in the mournful pages of a Niobe-like authoress, who invariably conducts them through a series of lacrymalian adventures, with a prison-gate in perspective at the conclusion of them:—in the course of the history, the pathetic lady, followed by a train of half-a-dozen small children, retires to the solitude of a cheap and remote cottage, or farm-house, attended by one servant girl, deserted by her dissipated and unfeeling husband; she is here sought out by her adorer, who thinks himself happy in being admitted to play with the spirited boys,

and

and fondle little Emma, ſo like mama! The fair ſuffering ſaint being uſually found extended upon a ſofa, weeping over the unlucky baby at her breaſt, and the attendant conſtantly employed in carrying out the other children, to exerciſe them, a taſk the girl has no objection to prolong as much as poſſible—how, thought Miſs Beauclerc, how in the name of the houſehold gods, can the myſteries of the *menage* be conducted! who waſhes, who duſts, who irons, who cleans, who mends, who cooks? No matter—if through the ignorance of a ruſtic wench, the lovely matron cannot avoid paſſing an hour in the preſence of her lover, and inviting him to ſtay dinner, an impaſſioned admirer will ſurely behold with an indulgent eye, the ſtirrup in her petticoat, and eat with an exquiſite reliſh, in her divine preſence, haſhed mutton burnt in the pot, or a ſmoaked beef ſteak.

Miſs Beauclerc, who had expected in her cottage the pleaſant refinements of that affluence to which ſhe had been accuſtomed, began to regret the loſs of Simpſon, whoſe diligence and attention to her convenience would at this moment have been ſo acceptable; and ſhe mentioned an intention of writing as ſhe had promiſed, to direct him where to ſeek her—an intention very grateful to Roſella, who had often repreſented to herſelf the old man's uneaſineſs at being abandoned ſo ſuddenly; and ſhe had even feared that his anxiety, and reſentment at ſo ſtrange a return for his long ſervices might be fatal to him: on his account ſhe did not regret the ſtubborn ſtupidity of poor Menie, nor the ruſticity of Nancy.

The boy who had led the horſe from Dunkeld, related the ſeveral diſaſters which had ſo much retarded his appearance. He had gone only

only a mile, before the ſtrap that faſtened the paniers, gave way, and when he buckled it a little tighter, it broke, and he was obliged to get it mended as well as he could; and then he was directed to the factor's new houſe inſtead of the right one, and in turning into the road to Guiardy again, he had to lead the beaſt up a hill ſo ſteep, that when he got to the top, he was near lying down with want of breath, ſo the guide was obliged to let him crop a little graſs to hearten him.

Roſella thought that ſo many combining circumſtances might well excuſe the tardineſs which had chagrined ſome of the faſting party, and would not ſuffer the weary poney to return to Dunkeld that night, even at the hazard of waiting for the dinner again on the following day: an effort of humanity Miſs Beauclerc readily concurred in, becauſe, independent of her natural compaſſion, a thatched-roofed heroine ſhould be the moſt commiſerating and tender-hearted of the pitying ſex. The next morning therefore by day-light the boy returned with a note to Mr. Craufurd, entruſting him with further commiſſions, and deſiring that he would enquire at the poſt-office for letters Miſs Beauclerc expected.

Roſella could not yet hope a reply to her's; but this method of ſending, inſpired her with the idea of being enabled to procure it unknown to her companion, by making a practice of inſpecting the load the carrier was charged with, the moment it arrived.

After breakfaſt, Miſs Beauclerc propoſed walking to Guiardy Park, and Roſella reluctantly complied: ſhe little imagined however, that her complaiſance had drawn her in to accompany her friend in a projected ſurvey of the

the houſe; but ſhe found that Miſs Beauclerc was reſolved not to return to her cottage without it. Notwithſtanding the approaching marriage of Lord Morteyne, Roſella felt a few ſcruples in *wandering* over his dwelling, prepared as ſhe underſtood it was, for his reception. But Miſs Beauclerc chid her for her folly, and deſired her to lay aſide childiſh prejudices, and truſt to her guidance.

She was far from willing to confeſs all the repugnance ſhe experienced in doing ſo; and ſilently followed her flighty friend, who having called upon a labourer ſhe happened to meet, to conduct her, after ſome difficulty procured a ſight of the houſekeeper, and with an air of marked condeſcenſion, ſuch as ſhe judged it a point of heroic etiquette to aſſume, ſhe announced her wiſh of being conducted through the apartments.

The perſonage thus accoſted had been firſt *femme-de-chambre* to the Dowager Lady Morteyne, and at her death had ſolicited to be retained in the family, hoping to be placed about the perſon of Lady Lucy; but unfortunately, though ſhe poſſeſſed the confidence of her deceaſed lady, and had been extremely uſeful to her, ſhe was known to have a temper ſo uncommonly acrimonious, that the houſehold which had the evil fortune to contain her, was uſually changed *du haut en bas* at leaſt once in a fortnight. Lady Lucy not knowing how to deny her requeſt, yet totally averſe to having ſuch a ſcourge amongſt her domeſtics, perſuaded her brother to ſend her to Guiardy in her preſent capacity. But retirement, which was on the part of Mrs. Tadpole entirely unwiſhed for, had not in the leaſt ſucceeded in correcting her

her foibles, or making her more indulgent to thoſe of others.

She had heard of the new comers at the houſe called the cottage, and concluded, from the expence and folly it exhibited ſo many ſymptoms of, that the ladies were nothing but kept madams, who were either ſent there by her Lord, or came to draw him in, becauſe they had heard in London he was going to Guiardy; ſo that inſtead of the charming old dame ſo repeatedly deſcribed in Miſs Beauclerc's ſtudies, who good-naturedly conducts people through the deſerted apartments of the manſion, and tells in confidence all the ſecret and bloody tranſactions which had happened in them ſome twenty or thirty years back, ſhe beheld a moſt forbidding-looking fury, caſt in the true Zantippean mould—a curved ſpine, a ſharp bony elbow, deſcending on one ſide half a foot below the protuberant hip, a thin long noſe deeply coloured at the tip, red hair, and eyes nearly of the ſame hue, whoſe beams far from being lambent, ſhot a fierce ſparkling light, and ſeemed to the imagination, to crackle and hiſs like the fire of a blackſmith's forge; her mouth was like a deſerted cemetery, which yawning upon the horror-ſtruck obſerver, diſplayed a variety of diſcoloured bones ſcattered in rude confuſion, and mouldering in their dark aſylum: her hand might have been lectured upon by an anatomiſt without the trouble of diſplacing the ſkin, and the fingers were ſo long and meagre, that they looked like the claw of an immenſe bird.

Miſs Beauclerc waited almoſt five minutes for a reply to her requeſt, whilſt Roſella ſhrunk from the coming anſwer, as a poor traveller

ſhrinks.

ſhrinks from an eruption of Mount Veſuvius which he finds himſelf unable to eſcape.

Mrs. Houſekeeper was, in the interim, endeavouring to collect in one furious ſentence, the wrath and indignation which for a moment had overpowered every faculty.

"You wants both of you to ſee the houſe! ſhe ſcreamed, in a voice that was at once both baſs and treble, tenor and counter-tenor, "ho, you wants to ſee the houſe!! and you wants other people to ſee your gew-gaw ſhow-box, as you have tricked up there; but you may go back to your dog-holes in London, and try to trap your fools there—there's none here as wouldn't turn up their noſes at ſuch trumpery! See the houſe quotha! and who'd be the ſimpleton to trundle after your draggle tails to ſhow it you?"

"For God's ſake," whiſpered Roſella, "let us go away!"

"See the houſe! you'll ſee the houſe of correction firſt—my Lord's not for ſuch as you—he's going to be married to an honeſt body, one as brings honor and money, and won't bring him to want and ſhame. See the houſe!" raiſing her tone to the higheſt pitch her voice would carry, "go ſee how they beats hemp, you young huſſy! And you, miſtreſs, don't think to come over your honeſt betters, with your mincing and ſimpering, to gain your wicked ends—what, you want's to ſee the houſe, do you?"

Roſella, expecting every moment to feel the claws of the termagant fixed in her eyes, was now ſo governed by ſhame and terror, that ſhe ran off with uncommon ſwiftneſs, and darting through a court-yard, ſoon gained the park without ſlackening her pace; and even then, was

ſo

so much under the impression of the antipathy and horror the beldame had inspired, that she flew over hill and dale in her way home, with the wildness of a maniac.

And now, the destiny of a heroine hovered over her: she was not fated to reach that home without an adventure; for in five minutes she was surrounded or rather enclosed on every side by horsemen of every description, and carriages of every denomination. Her recollection suddenly returned, and with it the unspeakable confusion of finding herself an object of curiosity, of compassion, of laughter, of ridicule, or diversion, as in different bosoms different opinions respecting her prevailed.

Rosella justly imagined this cavalcade to be the bridal train of Lady Morteyne, and would have given the universe to have escaped from further notice: independently of mortification, she felt extreme inconvenience from the difficulty of regaining her breath, which her running had made her lose, and from a dryness in the throat and mouth that almost threatened suffocation; she leaned against a tree, pressing her hand to her bosom with an energy indicative of great distress, which her countenance fully corroborated, when the voice of Lady Lucy Estcourt saluted her ear, whose accents spoke commiseration.

Rosella looked up, and perceived her endeavouring to descend from her carriage; but Lord Morteyne opposed her intention, not only by whispered dissuations, but by detaining her almost forcibly. Rosella could not attend to the issue of the contest, for the sight of Mr. Povey, who was laughing violently, and recounting some circumstance in which he often introduced her name, engaged, the next moment, all her attention:

tention: she could only distinguish however, the unconnected phrases—Irish fortune-hunter—disappeared from Edinburgh—recognized the lady at Dumbarton—cursed airs—fomented a damned scuffle—deserted in her turn.

"Good God!" thought she, "my application to Mr. Mordaunt is then too late; my reputation is gone, and Miss Beauclerc's friendship has undone me! Let me not however stay, here to witness such scorn?"

Swift as thought, she again darted forward, and unpursued reached the boundaries of the park, which she resolved never more to enter; and then, with a less hasty pace, returned to the cottage, forlorn, humiliated, sick of her existence, and fully resolved to hide her head where the cruel surmises of the world could never reach her.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Mama tears away the myſterious veil thrown over the affinity between herſelf and her daughter.

SHE had waited above an hour for the appearance of Miſs Beauclerc, and was much alarmed at her prolonged abſence: not ſo much from the dread of any accident having befallen her, of which ſhe did not think there was much probability, as from a horror of her betraying herſelf to the ridicule of the large party ſhe had herſelf juſt eſcaped from, by exhibiting the peculiarity of her ſentiments and expectations.

The anxious reflections of Roſella were interrupted at this period by Nancy, who ran in, ſaying that a ſtrange gentleman wanted to ſpeak to her. The idea of Mr. Mordaunt inſtantly occurred, and ſhe flew towards the door in a tranſport of delight, in the hope of being relieved from her diſtreſs by his friendly advice and interference, and reſcued from reproach. It was not however Mr. Mordaunt who waited admittance, but Mr. Delamere; and Roſella who had actually ſpread out her arms to welcome him, in the firſt emotion of her ſatisfaction, ſtood confounded and immoveable when ſhe diſcovered her error.

"I am

" I am ſorry, madam," ſaid the gentleman, " that my negligence of etiquette in not ſending in my name, ſhould have occaſioned a miſtake of perſon, which ſeems ſo much to chagrin you."

She had before felt awkward and abaſhed, and now loſing all compoſure and preſence of mind, ſunk into a ſeat, near which ſhe ſtood, and burſting into an agony of tears, laid her head upon the arm of a ſofa, and ſobbed violently.

Whatever the ſentiments of Mr. Delamere might be as to her conduct and principles, he was ſhocked at ſo ſtrong an expreſſion of anguiſh, and endeavored to conſole her, by obſerving that her peace of mind was yet retrievable, if ſhe would accept the advice and aſſiſtance of a lady, who had commiſſioned him to enquire if ſhe were indeed willing to receive the moſt eſſential ſervices.

" Tell me," ſuddenly interrupted Roſella, her tears for a moment ceaſing, " if you received a letter, or rather an encloſure, I addreſſed to you, at Eideva Lodge? If you have not, you may think you acquired a right to diſtreſs me thus, from the cruel miſtake I had not time to rectify when you left Warkworth ſo ſuddenly; did you receive that letter?"

" Certainly not," replied he.

" Then you have thought to this hour," purſued Roſella eagerly, " that I was abject enough to ſolicit your bounty, when I was anxious only to procure the loan of good offices, in a moment of embarraſſment to which my inexperience was unequal. Even that indeed was a liberty for which I have your pardon to entreat; and I muſt further beg you will wait the return of Miſs Beauclerc, who will reſtore the

the twenty pounds you left in my hands. I enclosed it instantly in a cover, and sent it by the post to the house of Mr. Mompesson; but I suppose it is lost."

"I will not ask your forgiveness," said Mr. Delamere, "for a mistake which reflected no discredit upon you: for poverty, my dear Miss Montresor, is an accidental evil, not a reproach; but imprudence and error persisted in———Let me inform you, however, that I am now deputed by Lady Lucy Estcourt, who wishes to learn if she can assist you in any way that may tend to extricate you from situations, in which a mind so ingenuous, and a heart so feeling as your's must be ill at ease. Lady Lucy is the best and most generous of her sex, and has suffered much from seeing you this morning so greatly distressed; and she thinks your appearance here is not calculated to remove unpleasant surmises, but may be productive of insult and impertinence, which, believe me, you will find it hard to bear."

"It is this insult, this impertinence, that I cannot indure!" exclaimed Rosella, flying out of the room, and hastening to her chamber, where she locked herself in; and indulging her tears, consoled herself with the reflection that remonstrance and representation which wounded her pride, and outraged her delicacy, could not then reach her ear.

After some time her distress rather abated, and she distinguished the voice of the lad returned from Dunkeld; the expected letter was now more than ever desirable, and she ran down to examine those he might bring; but not one appeared in her address. Amidst those of Miss Beauclerc however, she discovered the writing of Mr. Ellinger, and had little doubt but that he

had been prompted by Mr. Mordaunt to desire her return.

Whilst she held the letters in her hand, secretly commenting on the probable contents of that from her guardian, she learned from Nancy that Miss Beauclerc was in the music-room, and had been there above half an hour, and she ran to her, and presented the packet.

The countenance of Miss Beauclerc changed whilst she tore open the epistle of her Chancery-lane correspondent, and the unusual paleness of her cheeks increased, when she read the mandate that was meant to snatch Rosella from her.

"Let him," exclaimed she, in violent emotion, "exert the power I foolishly entrusted him with, and I will likewise assert mine!—Rosella," added she, "my poor deserted Rosella, the malicious cruelty of the unfeeling world but renders you more dear to me; know then, sweet solace of my widowed heart, that I am—thy mother! Nor can the dying request of thy murdered father now enforce a longer obedience, when my enemies have nearly succeeded in their barbarous endeavours to separate us!"

Rosella was almost convinced from this rhapsody, and the wild air with which it was uttered, that the intellects of her luckless friend were deranged, and exerted herself to sooth her rising frenzy.

"Dearest Miss Beauclerc," replied she, "let us return to Avelines; and there if you wish for my society, I am sure Mr. Ellinger will not deny it at our joint request; there you are known and respected, and there we shall live in peace, indifferent to the injustice of the world."

"Angelic creature!" exclaimed the matron, "is it thus you retort the insolent triumph of

that

that ungrateful man? I will further fortify your deteſtation, by informing you, that your dear unhappy father loſt his life by the diſhonorable co-operation of a part of this man's family, with a league of villains, who ſtripped him of his fortune, and then drove him by the baſeſt inſults to deſpair and death. Short and embittered was the happineſs my union with him afforded: he was too ſoon torn from my arms, and more than expiated his imprudence by his untimely fate!"

"Good Heavens!" thought Roſella, "what will become of me! How ſhall I pacify her violence, and prevent thoſe dreadful wanderings?"

"Dear madam," continued ſhe audibly, "Mr. Delamere did not appear, as you imagine, to triumph; on the contrary, he merely called at Lady Lucy's requeſt, to aſſure me of her good-will."

"Her good-will," retorted Miſs Beauclerc, every feature beaming indignation, "what perfidious inſolence! When I have learned that ſhe is particularly delighted with her unworthy brother's alliance, and that the woman he has marriade is her moſt intimate friend."

"Surely," ſaid Roſella in a perſuaſive tone, the marriage of Lord Morteyne is of no importance to me!"

"You are right, my child," replied Miſs Beauclerc, who appeared ſtruck by her manner, "it ſhould not be of any: I am charmed with the dignity of mind you diſplay; and when ſhe, "added, in a heroid voice, "your gentle heart has quite forgot the ingrate who could ſlight thoſe modeſt beauties, the paſſion of the worthy Oberne will I hope be encouraged."

"Mr.

"Mr. Oberne!" said Rosella, colouring; "I dare say he no longer remembered me when a few miles had parted us!"

Miss Beauclerc on hearing this supposition, so far forgot the outrageous injuries she had just discovered, as to smile.

"My Rosella," exclaimed she, suddenly recollecting herself, "you have not given me the sweet title of mother!—Come to my arms, my daughter, and, as such, embrace your only parent!"

At this tender invitation the follies which had cost Rosella so dear, faded on her memory; she still thought her friend's mind disordered, but that affection for her should be predominant when reason had almost fled, touched her soul.

"Dear Miss Beauclerc," said she, "you have ever displayed to me the kindness of a mother, and as such I must always regard you; let us only return to England, and then I may obtain the permission of Mr. Ellinger to remain with you; but against his injunctions, you are sensible I should not have the power to act as I wish."

"Have I not told you," replied the matronly heroine, with an air bordering on displeasure, "that you are my child? and do you hesitate, Rosella, to comply with my wishes, because they are opposed by the unnatural commands of a stranger? Unfortunate that I am!" continued she, bursting into tears; "did but my beloved daughter regard me with half the tenderness I bear her, she would fly from any authority, that was exerted to tear her from the lacerated bosom of her widowed mother!"

The distress, real and fictitious, of Miss Beauclerc had now worked to such a pitch of uncontroulable

controulable emotion, that Roſella was ſtaggered in the diſbelief of her ſtrange aſſertion; her mind was become the ſeat of confuſion, of anxiety, and terror, and all ſhe could now do was to careſs her ſobbing friend, and aſſure her of the moſt unlimitted affection.

"I believe you," interrupted ſhe; "promiſe me then, my child, that you will never deſert your mother: but if the man, entruſted with the guardianſhip of the ſmall ſum I ſecured to you in your infancy, ſhould claim you as his ward, I exact of your duty and love, that you will eſcape with me to ſome retreat, where his power cannot reach us!"

Roſella ſtarted at this wild propoſal, and ſhrunk aghaſt from bending herſelf to perform ſo raſh and imprudent an action: but the fear of increaſing the imagined frenzy of Miſs Beauclerc withheld her refuſal, and ſhe heſitated, ſtammered, changed color, yet no promiſe paſſed her lips.

"Am I deceived?" cried the widowed heroine. "Is your heart ſo wedded to the perfidious Morteyne, that you cannot determine to relinquiſh the ſight of him, even devoted to another?"

"What an idea!" exclaimed Roſella, with a bluſh of anger and indignation: "for Heaven's ſake, madam, do not mortify me in this cruel manner! Have I diſplayed ſo much forwardneſs towards Lord Morteyne, or any other man, that you ſhould for a moment think ſo ill of me?"

"Why then," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc, affecting an air of gentle compaſſion, "why not give me the promiſe I aſk?"

"What

" What anology can there be," said Rosella in amazement, " between Lord Morteyne and any engagement I may enter into with you?"

Miss Beauclerc seeing her offended, and not having any reply ready for this enquiry, desired that the subject might be waved until she had read her Selina's packet, to which Rosella assented in silence: and whilst her strange friend hurried through a lecture of eight pages, closely written, she was confirmed in the opinion she had already formed, that Mrs. Ellinger was the secret spring of those absurdities, which in Miss Beauclerc had given her so much anxiety and embarrassment.

The contents of this important packet were, as usual, kept a profound secret; and as the perusal of it lasted until the dinner was upon the table, the subject *in petto* was of course not immediately renewed.

This meal was as unhappily conducted as the preceding ones, and Miss Beauclerc becoming impatient and out of temper at such terrible indecorum, accused Nancy of awkwardness, and threatened to discharge Menie. During this discomposure, she undesignedly discovered to Rosella, that Simpson had returned to London, and having demanded his dismission of Mr. Ellinger, who was steward in the absence of his lady, had retired into his native county, exceedingly dissatisfied with her conduct.

The method by which Mr. Mordaunt had arrived at the knowledge of their unlucky adventures, instantly occurred to Rosella; yet she could not account for his having heard the detail of their meeting with Oberne, till she surmised that it must have reached Simpson through the correspondence of Mrs. Nancy with her aunt, which had begun before they left

left Edinburgh. She was not displeased to unravel the mystery of the secret enemy Miss Beauclerc had complained of—an idea that had constantly been accompanied by acute uneasiness; yet she grieved to have parted entirely from the poor old butler, with an impression left upon his mind of her unkindness and negligence.

After dinner Miss Beauclerc was silent and thoughtful; and seemed, Rosella feared, to be revolving in her mind some new whim. At length turning suddenly towards her—

"You mentioned," said she, "the name of Delamere, and joined it to that of Lady Lucy—he is now at Guairdy, I can well imagine; tell me, Rosella, did he come hither to insult you with his perfidy, and to display the double success of her wiles? For my poor Selina has heard, with the utmost indignation at such baseness, that he is shortly to be united to that artful woman, Morteyne's sister. Good God! that men will thus "on a fair mountain leave to feed, and batten on a moor!"

Rosella, who fancied she saw returning frenzy in the eye of her friend, would not contradict her too peremptorily; yet she could not endure to hear Lady Lucy Estcourt branded thus with baseness and art, or Mr. Delamere so vendictively charged with perfidy towards her, without wishing to confute an accusation so entirely unjust.

"Mr. Delamere, madam," said she, "has not surely given me cause to speak thus of him! I can at most have merely reason to be vexed that he believes too readily these calumnies which perhaps my own imprudence may have pointed. Towards Lady Lucy, it would be in me the height of impertinence to apply to her such

such terms as those you have used, since what I have constantly heard of her character and disposition, and the little I have had an opportunity of observing, have displayed them not only as unoffending, but extremely amiable. Yet I am convinced, dear madam, that the warmth of your censure proceeds from your too great partiality for me; but I am hurt that it should lead you to commit even in thought, the least injustice."

Miss Beauclerc raised her hands in admiration, and apostrophised her as a patient, dispassionate, much-injured angel, enthusiastically extolling her for pleading the merits of people who deserved only her resentment.

"In what respect, Madam?" asked Rosella.

"Did not Delamere," returned she, "display at Sedgfield a very particular admiration of you?"

"Not to my observation," said Rosella, very much vexed: yet even if the circumstances of the moment, and want of other amusement had induced him to pay me a few compliments, and I had been silly enough to think them of more importance than they were meant to be, surely the manner in which we quitted him, after an intercourse of apparent good will, might justify on his side any change of sentiments, and leave me little reason to complain, if Mr. Delamere now chuses to offer a just tribute of admiration to the merits of any worthy woman, whose situation, family, fortune, and character may be exactly all he wishes."

"A man must be a fordid wretch," exclaimed Miss Beauclerc, "if in seeking a wife he considers situation, family and fortune!"

Rosella, who saw all the ardor of romance and sentiment sparkle in her eyes, was silent; for

for she had before heard her friend declare, that a man who could attach himself so prudently, must inevitably be a very cool lover: indeed a lover such as Miss Beauclerc, in the course of her lectures, had so often met with, who without any reasonable cause flies to some remote village, and there never fails to encounter, in his rambles, an incognita of pensive mein and doubtful character, whom, in defiance of common caution, and repeated warnings, he adores through thick and thin—was the lover she could alone allow to wear the myrtle. But the argument Rosella had used she felt the force of, though she was unwilling to own it; nay, she even began to think that there are very few lovers whose cannon-proof constancy might be so far relied upon, after enduring three or four such freaks, as even to give hope of a return of allegiance.

Fortunately this subject at present so wholly occupied her, that she forgot to renew her enquiry of the conversation that had passed when Mr. Delamere had visited the cottage, or again to urge the topic which had been waved before dinner. The afternoon was employed as usual, when any thing important had happened, in writing to Selina; and Rosella very soberly sat down to work—a vulgarity a heroine is scarcely ever caught at, her elegant and simple wardrobe being composed of such sublime materials as never to require alteration or repair.

The mind of Rosella was not however, so peaceful as her employment seemed to indicate: she thought much of the injury her fame had sustained from her fatal journey—an injury she was doubtful if even the advice and friendship of Mr. Mordaunt could efface; and her imagination dwelt too, in spite of her incredulity,

upon the ſtrange affirmation of Miſs Beauclerc, that ſhe was her daughter.

"Should it be ſo! thought Roſella; "but no, it is impoſſible! It could not have been preſerved ſo long a ſecret from the world: Mr. Ellinger muſt know it, and Mr. Mordaunt. Surely they would have informed me of ſo important a circumſtance—my unhappy friend *muſt* be diſordered in her intellects; yet if I am indeed her daughter!—if for my ſake ſhe has refuſed more than one eligible alliance, and as ſhe ſays, lives but for me, ought I not to endure for her, the mortification which the opinions of ſome cenſorious people might give me, and perform my duty without ſhrinking? But Mr. Mordaunt will decide for me—I will be guided by his judgment, and his friendſhip; and I think he will not neglect me, at leaſt I will hope not."

Miſs Beauclerc, who was writing during this ſoliloquy, with the energy which enthuſiaſm uſually gave her pen, ſuddenly threw her letter aſide—

"Yes," exclaimed ſhe, "I will wring the ſelfiſh ſoul of this unfeeling man, and make him groan with remorſe, amidſt his bridal revels!"

"My God, what now!" whiſpered Roſella, turning pale with apprehenſion; Oh that I were an hundred miles from this place!"

"My child," continued the ſage matron, all gentle as you are, and unwilling to inflict puniſhment for the wrongs you endure, tell me what even you will allow that monſter to deſerve, whoſe family having contributed to make an orphan of a lovely innocent young creature, he can, without remorſe, have the barbarity to gain her guileleſs heart, and then not only leave her to ſcorn and deriſion, but deprive her of another

another lover, whoſe merits and attachment might have effaced all her ſorrows?"

"Indeed, madam, I cannot at all decide," replied Roſella; "becauſe I never had a lover, and cannot aſcertain how far a lady may be affected by the loſs of one."

A heroine without a lover! Roſella without an adorer!—The idea was not to be endured.

"Yes, my dear," ſaid the lady eagerly, "you have lovers, but they are unworthy of you!"

"Well then," replied Roſella, endeavouring to ſmile, "we will not, dear Madam, make them of importance to us, if they are unworthy: let us think no more of them."

"I admire your fortitude," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, "and I will imitate it. I muſt however, once more ſee this worldly-minded Morteyne, for I have a pecuniary affair to ſettle with him, which I will not delay: and though," continued ſhe with ardor, "by paying him the ſum mentioned in his uncle's nefarious bond, I ſhould be reduced to beggary, with you, my Roſella, I would rather wander from door to door than not part with it."

Roſella was much terrified by her vehemence—

"Deareſt madam," ſaid ſhe, taking her hand, "condeſcend this once to liſten to me. If you have any buſineſs to tranſact with Lord Morteyne, let Mr. Ellinger or Mr. Mordaunt ſettle it: you can give them your directions."

"Mr. Ellinger," interrupted Miſs Beauclerc, "has already ſettled it, but not to my ſatisfaction; and this once at leaſt, I will purſue my own unſhackled will."

She then reſumed her pen, and as Roſella could not forbear obſerving, addreſſed Lord Morteyne,

Morteyne, with a formal requeſt to have the honor of half an hour's converſation at her cottage on the next day.

As ſhe was folding the billet, Roſella, unable to endure her apprehenſions of the reſult, threw herſelf on her knees, and entreated that the affair might reſt a few days longer; but her ſolicitations were effectually checked by her friends reply.

"No, my child," returned ſhe, with a dignified air, "your fond efforts to ſcreen this ingrate from pangs he well merits, ſhall not avail him; therefore urge me no more."

And almoſt inſtantly, ſhe deſired Nancy to give the note to Maclean, who was to proceed with it immediately to Guairdy.

Roſella, burſting into tears of mortification and anguiſh, left the room, and retreated to her chamber; but Miſs Beauclerc was not on this occaſion, to be moved from her purpoſe by the diſtreſs ſhe exhibited, and Roſella ſaw Maclean, from her window, take the way to the park. She repreſented to herſelf Lord Morteyne obtruded upon at his dinner-table, by the unlucky note; for Miſs Beauclerc had ſtrictly charged her meſſenger not to return without an anſwer, conceiving in the ardor of her ſublime revenge, that the common uſages of the world, etiquette, and good manners muſt all give way before more conſequential concerns; and certainly, like many other woe-worn heroines, ſhe thought her imaginary wrongs of the higheſt import.

Roſella pictured to her fancy the contemptuous anger of Lord Morteyne; ſhe ſaw the unfortunate ſcroll thrown from one to another, accompanied by burſts of ridicule, and the ſneers of malice: ſhe recollected the impertinence

nence of the reptile Povey, and ſhe had experienced the inſolence of Mr. Eſtcourt; but in this mortifying ſcene, her candour brought forward the compaſſionate interference of his amiable ſiſter, and the moderation of Delamere: ſhe now wiſhed that ſhe had had more command over her feelings, and received the well-meant offer of Lady Lucy in a different manner.

Her perturbation became extreme, and ſhe even meditated to avoid the mortifications that appeared to await her, by walking to Dunkeld, and returning to England by the aid of that advice and aſſiſtance ſhe had in the morning rejected. This thought was however, only the momentary effervescence of ſuffering pride and wounded delicacy: but though ſhe rejected the idea of leaving Miſs Beauclerc in a clandeſtine manner, ſhe ſtill propoſed to herſelf to pretend that ſhe had ſome purchaſes to make at Dunkeld, and entreat her friend to permit her to walk thither the next day, attended by Maclean; and thus ſhe thought to eſcape the horror of ſeeing Lord Morteyne, ſhould he think proper to attend the ſummons he would receive.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The elegance of the cottage ſullied by ignorant ruſticity—a captive hero reduced to deſpair.

ROSELLA having in ſome degree compoſed herſelf, at length rejoined Miſs Beauclere, who was waiting with extreme impatience the return of her envoy; but though the diſtance to the great houſe was little more than a mile and a half, Maclean had not completed his commiſſion in three hours;—indeed, to do him juſtice, it would have been impoſſible to liſten to the hiſtories poured into his ear by the third table gentry, and in return, ſuffer others ſcarcely leſs inſtructive to be extracted from him, in a ſhorter time.

Nancy at laſt entered to announce his return.

"Where is the note," aſked Miſs Beauclere impatiently, "the letter, the reply?"

Nancy diſappeared to fetch it; but brought it at the tip of her tongue.

"Maclean ſays, ma'am, that Mr. Johnſon, the gentleman, he ſays, his lord ſays, his lord is ſorry to ſend a—verdant anſwer to your noate; but the reaſon is, his lord is a drinking his wind—but howſever, he'll make it up to-morrow by coming to ſee you."

Nancy

Nancy having now performed her part, by giving the *coup de grace* to this mutilated meſſage, retired to purſue the enquiries ſhe had already begun of Maclean, concerning the proceedings of the grand people at the Park: and Miſs Beauclerc, burſting with indignation, exclaimed to Roſella—

"I expected this, and am not ſurpriſed; I was prepared for ſuch behaviour, by the treatment I received this morning. That horrid woman, who was tutored I ſuppoſe to inſult us, had not finiſhed her peal of abuſe, when a ſervant rode up to the houſe, to announce the approach of his lord and lady. I was rather ſurpriſed, as you may well imagine, to hear him ſpeak of his lady, but concluded, after a moment of reflection, that the man meant Lady Lucy, and I reſolved to ſee her before I returned home, that ſhe might learn the outrageous inſolence of her domeſtic. The abuſive creature haſtily retreated, muttering her diſcontent that ſhe had not received any previous notice; and I waited ſome time before the carriages drew up to the door. When I diſcerned Lady Lucy, I inſtantly advanced to her, and repreſenting what the conduct of the houſekeeper had been, deſired her immediate diſmiſſion; but Lady Lucy, with an air of confuſion, the conſciouſneſs of her too ſucceſsful arts might well give her, replied, that ſhe was only a gueſt at Guairdy, but ſhe had little doubt her ſiſter, Lady Morteyne, would diſcourage any improper conduct in her ſervants.

"The ſuſpicions I had before repelled as totally impoſſible, were by this ſpeech confirmed beyond a doubt; and certainly my indignation muſt have been very apparent. I turned with all the contempt I really felt, towards a young

young woman who had descended from another carriage, and was hanging upon the arm of the vile Morteyne, in an effected emotion of fear and distress; when this shameless man advancing to me, said, with the most undaunted assurance—

'Lady Morteyne, madam, is at present fatigued with her journey, and will be engaged in welcoming her guests; at any other time she would attend to your complaints without hesitation—at present you must excuse her.'

"With an air of defiance he then passed me, leading the woman into the house, and calling to Lady Lucy to follow him. I believe I should have sunk with the various agitations that oppressed me, had not that artful creature pretended great feeling, and called to a person I discovered to be that foolish fellow Povey, who by her directions, offered me his arm to assist me home.

"But, good Heavens! so completely had the insolence of this family humbled me in the eyes of this despicable being, that even he added his tribute of insult to that I had already endured: his impertinence however restored me to the pride of offended dignity, and I left the place with sensations less painful, I will venture to assert, than those which agitated the bosom of the self-condemned Morteyne."

Miss Beauclerc here closed her lamentable narrative, which added considerably to the misery of Rosella, who writhed with agony at the description of her indignant friend's interview with the astonished inhabitants of Guairdy Park.

"Not for the world," thought she, "would I now see Lord Morteyne, or any part of his family: if Miss Beauclerc will not suffer me to go

go to Dunkeld, I will ſhut myſelf up in my chamber, and nothing ſhall induce me to quit it."

With great doubt of its ſucceſs, ſhe made her propoſition, and was much ſurpriſed to find it complied with: indeed Miſs Beauclerc who well knew that a heroine ſhould never place her foot over the threſhold of her charming dwelling without an adventure, was in hopes this expedition might furniſh one, at leaſt, to conſole her for the horrible defection of two men, whom in looking forward to the career of Roſella's brilliant adventures, ſhe had marked, in imagination, for the main ſprings of the whole machinery. She complied with her wiſh, that Maclean ſhould attend her, and deſired ſhe would return in a chaiſe if ſhe found herſelf fatigued. Mr. Craufurd was as uſual, charged with innumerable commiſſions, which Roſella promiſed not to forget mentioning to him.

As ſhe parted with Miſs Beauclerc for the night, ſhe received a parental embrace and a tender bleſſing, which renewed the combat ſhe before experienced between incredulity and a ſort of innate conviction, that much diſquieted her. She had however, ſo little of the ſublime in her nature, that it never entered her imagination to conſult the pale moon till any great clock ſtruck the morning hour, or even to ſtand gazing till midnight upon the pine-clad hill, marking very carefully all its inflexions by the deepening ſhades—no, ſhe endeavored to compoſe herſelf to reſt, and after ſome time had elapſed, which the agitation of her mind ſtole from her ſlumbers, her eyelids cloſed in forgetfulneſs, merely from theſe phyſical reaſons, that ſhe was not yet quite eighteen, and was in perfect health.

The

The conſequence was, that in the morning ſhe was not ſo unfortunate as to over-ſleep the hour ſhe had appointed for her departure—an accident that will happen in ſpite of philoſophy, if people do not go to bed till the ſun riſes, and the birds begin to carol their morning ſong; a practice much to be deplored in behalf of thoſe gentle creatures who are confined, it may be againſt their inclination, in an old tower of an old caſtle, and by ſuch a lamentable misfortune. ſometimes loſe a long-projected opportunity, as their hiſtorians inform the world, of making their eſcape.

Roſella had determined to ſet out at ſix o'clock, when ſhe thought there would be little probability of having her promenade interrupted by any of the Guairdy family or their gueſts; and as ſhe ſuppoſed Mrs. Craufurd would invite her to ſtay dinner at Dunkeld, ſhe hoped at her return they would be engaged at table, from which ſhe concluded they did not riſe till very late.

Having breakfaſted, ſhe called for Maclean, who appeared in his beſt array, with his red hair combed out to its full length, his hideous countenance ſhining with the rough ablution it had undergone, and grinning with complacency at the honor to which his deſtiny had promoted him.

Roſella ſatisfied herſelf that he was well acquainted with the road to Dunkeld, and began her expedition with more ſpeed than it was likely ſhe ſhould continue, congratulating herſelf at every twenty ſteps, that ſhe was leaving Guairdy, and the cottage behind her.

Miſs Beauclerc who had performed all the ceremonies of watching, praying, gazing at the pale beams of the moon and at its ſhadows, and clock-

clock-counting, was not so matinal as her young companion: but she heard her depart, and recollecting that Lord Morteyne would probably call in the morning, though no time had been mentioned, she started up and dressed herself hastily, that she might have time to seek amongst her papers, which she always carried from place to place with her, and which were almost as numerous and ill-arranged as those of a Prime Minister, for those relating to the bond and money obligations of her deceased husband, to the late Mr. Estcourt.

She sought however nearly two hours in vain, and after a strong contest between hunger and sublimity, finding that hunger remained master of the field of battle, she rung for her breakfast, which was to be placed as usual in the music-room, and desired Nancy to put every thing quickly in order to the adjoining one, where she intended to receive the culprit, and overwhelm him with regret for having so basely given up the taste he ought to have cultivated, for the delicious and tranquil pleasures to be found under a thatched roof.

Nancy, who could not, as she justly observed to herself, do two things at once, and concluded that the most pressing command was that which related to the breakfast, employed herself in getting it ready, and issued her own orders and instructions to Menie to accomplish the other task.

Miss Beauclerc quite forgetting the reduced state of her rural household, and satisfied with having signified her pleasure, as if she had been surrounded by domestics as at Avelines, again resumed her employment, which lasted almost two hours longer; and the breakfast was scarcely

ſcarcely concluded, and the neceſſary documents brought to light, before Nancy ran into the room in an agony of perturbation, and announced the Lord.

"Have you ſhown his Lordſhip into the portico-chamber?" aſked her miſtreſs, in ſome emotion.

"Yes, Madam," replied Nancy, trembling. "Oh jemini!" whiſpered ſhe, as ſhe withdrew, "now all the murder will out, as ſure as thunder!"

Miſs Beauclerc heard the ſoliloquy, and applied it to her own grievances; for ſhe imagined them of ſo ſerious and wide-ſpreading a nature, that even the domeſtics of both families were well acquainted with them, and ſympathized in the wrongs of the offended beauty. She was now however, compelled to diſmiſs every idea except that of aſſuming the moſt dignified attitude, and the moſt majeſtic air that ever marbled the features of injured virtue: and having at length ſucceeded to her wiſh, ſhe threw open the door of the audience-room, and beheld—the agonized Morteyne pacing the apartments perhaps, with the pale face of deſpair, and the frantic motions of a madman—no!—he was very compoſedly ſtanding at the entrance of the portico, thinking of the improvements he had long meditated at Guairdy, towards which his eyes were earneſtly bent; but Miſs Beauclerc beheld one of the frames of her drawings ſhattered to pieces, and fragments of glaſs ſtrewed about the carpet, which near the entrance of the room had loſt much of its cleanlineſs and brilliancy: the portico exhibited likewiſe ſome ſymptoms of recent diſaſter, for ſeveral plants had been laid low, and the earth eſcaped from the pots, had not been

been gathered up, but mixed very cordially with the water the ſaucers had contained, and made the fineſt bed of mud in the world: yet even this Miſs Beauclerc might have forgiven, but to climax the misfortunes of the day, every chair in the room exhibited a black and very perfect impreſſion of a pair of broad naked feet, which like the creſt or arms of the proprietor, appeared to have been purpoſely ſtamped there, to aſcertain the right of poſſeſſion.

This was too much for heroiſm itſelf to ſupport with patience and fortitude. Surpriſe, anger, and confuſion chaſed away every ſymptom of calm dignity from her features; and when Lord Morteyne with ſome difficulty, made his way towards her with the uſual ſalutation, ſhe found it impoſſible to reſume any compoſure or preſence of mind. To have pointed with ſilent gravity to a ſeat, and taken one herſelf, could not be done, as ſuch a movement would have transferred the drawing of Menie's feet to her garments, and thoſe of the gentleman.

Whether this idea, or any other ſtill more whimſical, ſtruck upon the imagination of Lord Morteyne, cannot be decided: he could not however forbear ſmiling, as he begged to be informed of her commands.

"I have no commands for Lord Morteyne," ſaid the lady, with leſs ſeverity of manner than ſhe had originally intended to have diſplayed; "but if your lordſhip will take the trouble to walk into the next room, I will return the motive that urged me to treſpaſs thus upon your time."

He complied with the requeſt in ſilence, imagining he was doomed to liſten to a long hiſtory of complaints, excited by the over-flowing gall

of

of Mrs. Tadpole, his Guairdy houſekeeper—a mortification he choſe however to endure, rather than ſuffer his lady to be tormented with the trouble of ſettling the affair: and with this prepoſſeſſion, he was extremely ſurpriſed to obſerve Miſs Beauclerc unfolding a number of papers apparently of ancient date, which would aſſiſt her, ſhe ſaid, in elucidating the myſtery ſhe was then going to explain.

My lord at this hint looked exceſſively grave, in proportion as the hands of the lady began to tremble, her cheeks to flow with tears, and her boſom to ſob, as the writing of her long loſt love was unveiled to her fond eyes. She ſnatched ſome of the papers, and preſſed them to her heart—

"Father of my Roſella!" exclaimed ſhe. And the eye of Lord Morteyne caught the name of Eſtcourt repeatedly traced on moſt of the papers. This circumſtance, joined to the ejaculation, excited a greater degree of intereſt in his mind than he had believed it to be in the power of Miſs Beauclerc to excite, and he waited very impatiently to be relieved from ſome unpleaſant ſenſations of anxiety and alarm.

"You had an uncle?" ſaid the gentle *elucidator*, after a pauſe of ſome moments.

"I had three, madam," returned her auditor.

"It may be," reſumed Miſs Beauclerc, rather diſconcerted: "but the man to whom I owe all the hours of ſorrow I have known—the man whoſe vices were deſtined to be a ſcourge to me and mine!——Alas, my Lord, I have little inclination to rejoice in the proſperity of your houſe, and your lordſhip cannot wonder that I ſhould ſuffer my anguiſh to relieve itſelf in the bitterneſs of complaint."

"Perhaps,

" Perhaps, Madam," ſaid he rather gravely, " I ſhould wonder leſs, if you would do me the honor to give me ſome intimation of the injuries you ſeem to deplore."

" I entreat your patience," cried the lady: " ſurely, my Lord, you will allow for the imbecility of grief?"

" I compaſſionate imbecility of whatever kind it may be," replied Lord Morteyne; " but give me the liberty to obſerve, that my impatience to learn the grievances you hint at, is in part the effect of an earneſt wiſh to alleviate them."

" That, my Lord, is not in your power," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, with ſomething of anger in her manner.

" If it is ſo," obſerved he, " you will pardon me, madam, that I am at a loſs to comprehend why you have given yourſelf this trouble. You mentioned the name of the young lady who reſides with you—I am unacquainted with her family or her connexions; but if Lady Morteyne or my ſiſter, have the power of ſerving her, I will be reſponſible for their inclination."

The indignation and diſdain of Miſs Beauclerc at this propoſition, were unbounded—

" My Lord," ſaid ſhe, " I will ſhorten what I meant to ſay—this bond, which I found amongſt my father's papers, was granted to the Hon. Thomas Eſtcourt, a man without one good principle or inherent virtue."

" He is no more, madam; and in the name of his ſurviving relations, I entreat that you will ſuffer the name of my uncle ———."

" You had *three*, my Lord!" retorted the lady in great heat and agitation; " and I hope thoſe you ſtill boaſt of, amply conſole you and the

the ſurviving relations, for your ineſtimable loſs in the third.

Lord Morteyne was piqued, becauſe he was really conſcious that Mr. Eſtcourt had by no means been an ornament to the family name.

"I take my leave, madam," ſaid he, haughtily, and riſing as he ſpoke.

Miſs Beauclerc felt rather ſhocked that her reſentment had been roufed to a degree ſo far exceeding the gentle anger of a heroine, and replied, with a more ſubdued air—

"Take with you, my lord, theſe memorials of your uncle," preſenting him the bond: "take with you likewiſe my note for the ſum marked in it, the ſole inheritance of a much-injured orphan! and when next the family exploits are emblazoned, forget not to record in the name of the Hon. Thomas Eſtcourt, the ruin and death of a credulous but virtuous man, and the beggary of his helpleſs child!"

Having pronounced this ſentence with proper emphaſis, the lady ſuddenly vaniſhed, leaving Lord Morteyne motionleſs with ſurpriſe and diſmay, internally agitated by wounded pride, and I fear that theſe charges might be too well founded. The bond and note he knew not how to diſpoſe of, but he reſolved not to retain them in his poſſeſſion after he had quitted the houſe: yet he was entirely averſe to tempt a ſecond interview with Miſs Beauclerc, whoſe emotions, exclamations, and elucidations were too ſublime for his taſte, and who, to finiſh the ſcene in ſtyle, was now ſobbing in the next room in ſo audible a key, that his lordſhip could not fail to hear her.

He obſerved that the poor lady had locked the door of communication between them, and he could not therefore return the papers into her

her poſſeſſion. But at length, his firſt confuſion ſubſiding, he recollected that, as writing materials lay upon the table before him, he could encloſe them in a wafered cover, under Miſs Beauclerc's addreſs, very ſafely; which he haſtened to do, that he might fly the houſe, and eſcape any further pathetic declamation.

This taſk accompliſhed, he endeavoured to open the door leading to the garden, and finding that it was faſtened, rung the bell, to be relieved from his dilemma: but Nancy, fancying this ſummons was the prelude to anger, ſcolding, and perhaps diſmiſſion, inſtead of anſwering it in perſon, ran into the grove to hide herſelf; and Menie, who was ſtill a greater culprit, followed her example.

Lord Morteyne rung a ſecond time—a third time, and Miſs Beauclerc ſtill ſobbed in the next room. At length his patience was ſo wholly exhauſted, that he ventured to intrude upon her ſorrows, by a humbling petition ſtating his caſe, and praying relief.

"It is in vain to ſue, my Lord," ſaid the mourner, interrupting him, "I will not ſee you."

"But for heaven's ſake *hear* me, Madam," ſaid he; "I cannot quit the room."

"I have already heard too much," ejaculated Miſs Beauclerc with a deep ſigh.

Lord Morteyne was not of the ſame opinion, ſo he renewed his efforts to explain his ſituation.

"My Lord, I inſiſt that you leave the houſe," cried he vehemently.

"I deſire it equally with yourſelf," retorted the priſoner: "and if you would condeſcend to liſten, I would inform you that the other door of this apartment is locked."

Miſs Beauclerc was now upon her knees, invoking the ſpirit of her ſainted huſband—of

courſe no ſublunary ſound could reach her ear, and Lord Morteyne, finding all explanation vain, turned to the window, in the hope of making his ſortie from thence: but unfortunately, it happened to be a Gothic caſement ſo interlaced with wood work, that he ſaw the attempt would be uſeleſs, unleſs he ſhould be reduced to the deſperate neceſſity of breaking away through—an alternative he really began to fear he muſt have recourſe to. Once more he applied to the bell, with a vehemence that ſoon ended every hope from that expedient, by pulling it down. He now no longer heard the voice of the lady in the adjoining room, and imagined ſhe had quitted it, until a renewed plaint ſtruck his ear.

"Miſs Beauclerc," ſaid he eagerly, "I believe you have not underſtood me———"

"Ceaſe," exclaimed ſhe, "ceaſe your uſeleſs importunity—I am immoveably fixed!"

"And ſo it ſeems am I!" muttered he: then raiſing his voice, "Good God! will you not liſten to me? I have been this laſt half hour endeavouring to make you ſenſible that I am a priſoner—the glaſs door is locked, madam, as well as this, and my importunity will not ceaſe until you have ordered one of your domeſtics to open it."

No anſwer was returned to this eclairciſſement: indeed Miſs Beauclerc, fully determined to ſtand the ſiege ſhe ſuppoſed the remorſe of Lord Morteyne was preparing her, had quietly retired, to import from her chamber ſome books and her writing-deſk, which ſhe choſe to do without aſſiſtance, that ſhe might not expoſe his frantic demeanor to her ſervants.

When ſhe returned, ſhe heard his lordſhip laughing aloud; for the ridicule of his ſituation ſtruck him ſo forcibly, that he forgot his recent

cent emotions: and as he was now convinced that his captivity had been designed, he concluded that the former part of the farce had not much foundation in truth.

"Poor maniac!" sighed Miss Beauclerc, who imagined that his agonies had overset his reason: a revolution, however sudden and violent, she had read many instances of—"What will now avail your unhappy bride, that she has triumphed over an artless and lovely young creature, and planted a thorn in her guileless bosom not to be extracted?"

Lord Morteyne could only hear a few words of this ejaculation; but the mention of his bride reminding him that his prolonged absence might alarm her, he very earnestly renewed his entreaties that Miss Beauclerc would open the door, which she refused with the perseverance of a heroine; and he protested, that if she continued to treat him in so absurd and unprecedented a manner, she must excuse the consequence.

The lady returned no answer, but stepping towards the offices, espied Menie creeping into the kitchen, with all the precaution she could use, that she might not be heard. Miss Beauclerc beckoned her to follow, and returned to her post, Menie standing near the entrance of the room, hanging down her head, that she might not have the horror of beholding the devastation her awkward destiny, and the unlucky commands of Nancy, had made her commit. Her lady remained silent, and in a few minutes a horrid crash was heard from the music-room. —— Miss Beauclerc started, and her attendant stared. The noise was continued, and shortly succeeded by an outrageous knocking and thumping, as if his imprisoned lordship had

been amuſing his *ennui* by applying the poker to the chairs and tables.

Miſs Beauclere was now really frightened. "Run," exclaimed ſhe, "run, Menie, and inform his unhappy family that Lord Morteyne has loſt his reaſon!"

"Maun I ſay that the deil's in him?" aſked Menie, in ſome doubt.

"Yes, yes," replied her lady, ſtill more alarmed on hearing the uproar increaſe;—— "ſay that his mind's o'erthrown, that Reaſon is hurled from her ſeat!"

"Trath, and a does hairl 'em," thought Menie; "a hairls 'em mair than I hairl'd 'em wi my pauky feet!"

She then ſet off with great ſpeed for Guairdy, to give the alarm, telling every one ſhe met, that the laird had ſauld himſel to the deil, and was delcerit and roaring doon at maiſtreſs's hooſe, looder than the roombling brig.

This alarming report ſoon ſpread amongſt the ſervants, ſome of whom ruſhed into the apartment of lady Lucy, where unfortunately her ſiſter-in-law happened to be, and repeated the diſmal news in her preſence.

Lady Morteyne fainted; and ſome of the moſt unmoved of her gueſts endeavoured to render her ſome aſſiſtance, whilſt lady Lucy almoſt as diſtracted as her brother was repreſented to be, ran towards the cottage to aſcertain the truth, which was *elucidated* much ſooner than ſhe could have hoped, by the appearance of Lord Morteyne walking with the utmoſt compoſure to Guairdy, with his right hand bound up in a handkerchief ſtained with blood. She embraced him with affectionate concern; and not ſeeing any other mark of emotion on his countenance than ſurpriſe at her

her behaviour, began to loſe her apprehenſions, and ventured to aſk what accident had happened to him.

" The moſt ſtrange and abſurd," replied he, " that could poſſibly happen: I have been a priſoner, Lucy, to a fair lady, and could only eſcape her enchantments by breaking her windows and window-frames, which my impatience prompted me to do, and in the exploit I have cut my hand. That poor woman at the cottage, as ſhe calls the place, is as completely deranged as any of Doctor W———'s patients; ſhe ought not to be at this moment without a ſtrait-waiſtcoat!"

This retorted charge of inſanity appeared to lady Lucy ſo much better founded than the firſt, than ſhe entirely loſt her ſuſpicions of the greater evil.——" How I pity that poor girl," exclaimed ſhe, " who accompanies her from place to place! Surely ſhe ought to be reſcued from ſuch a ſituation!"

" We muſt leave her to her deſtiny," replied Lord Morteyne; " for Miſs Beauclerc is equal to the abſurdity of giving out that ſhe is a natural child of the family, deſerted from infancy; or of embroiling us in a law-ſuit for property, of which ſhe pretends our deceaſed uncle plundered the father of this girl."

The exclamations of Miſs Beauclerc, of which he now retained but a confuſed recollection, and the bond hiſtory commixed, formed in the mind of Lord Morteyne an aſſociation of ideas he thus explained.

Lady Lucy looked aſtoniſhed, and ſo did her brother, on perceiving a number of domeſtics flying towards them, headed by his male gueſts, and followed by thoſe of the ladies who moſt abounded in courage and curioſity.

" What the devil," exclaimed he, " is the meaning of all this?"

Lady Lucy could ſcarcely forbear laughing. —" Our friends," replied ſhe, " have heard that your ſituation required aſſiſtance, and I ſuppoſe they are marching this way to offer it."

Lord Morteyne, thinking ſhe alluded to his impriſonment, ſmiled at the idea of being reſcued from the lady's power by a *poſſe comitatus*.

By this time he was ſurrounded by his gueſts and his houſehold, excepting of the former, Mr. Povey, who, having become both a great man and a faſhionable man, could not poſſibly traverſe the ſpace of a mile and a half without his horſes and ſervant: and whilſt the groom was getting ready at a minute's notice, he amuſed himſelf with aſking queſtions of Menie, who was in the ſtable-yard, and had been giving a long detail of the diſaſters of the morning, to a helper who was her admirer.

From her, Mr. Povey learned that Roſella was gone to Dunkeld, that ſhe walked there, and would walk back with maiſter Maclean: that maiſter Maclean was the gardener, and had ſaid they could not return till evening.

Menie now found another auditor in Mr. Eſtcourt, who had but then arrived at the ſeat of his brother; and having overtaken the numerous party in the park, juſt ſtaid to hear the outline of the ſtory which appeared to divert them ſo extremely, before he haſtened to the houſe, to take ſome repoſe after having paſſed the preceding night in receiving a feſtive welcome to the North.

Happy was it for the quiet of Roſella, that ſhe never heard the converſation which now paſſed between this gentleman and the worthy Mr. Povey, when they had diſmiſſed poor Menie,

nie, whom they joined very manfully to curſe to all eternity, for being freckled like a toad, and having a damned noſe like the rump of a gooſe. Indeed the *ci-devant* attorney's clerk was one of the moſt valiant oath-fanciers in the three kingdoms; for he really believed that the firſt commiſſion preſented to him through the folly of his uncle, not only entitled him to the honors of the ſword and cockade, but included him as part owner of a patent, for every abſurdity and vice he ſo often envied his former friends for appearing to hold the privilege of committing with impunity, by their initiation into the court of faſhion—that raree-ſhew, which, to the gaping and ſhallow-headed gazers without, ſeems adorned with ſuch exquiſite allurement!—Put your noſes into the box, good people, and ſee what wretched machinery, what cut paper and gilt trumpery you regard with admiring eyes!

Mr. Povey was now no longer a Cornet of the Guards, for he wiſhed to riſe rapidly, and had purchaſed a company in a regiment of foot then in Scotland; meaning, by a ſecond change, to daſh again into high life, as the irreſiſtible Colonel Povey, whom all the women ogled and died for, in vain.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

A botanical journey—and an elucidation of a little quiet menage.

ROSELLA, during the fracas at the cottage, and that at Guairdy, unconſcious of the extent to which her miſtaken friend meant to carry her heroiſm, retraced the romantic road to Dunkeld, aſſiſted by the more habitual knowledge of her attendant, who happened perchance, to poſſeſs that intuitive genius and taſte for botanical ſtudies, which has, within a few years, ſo ſuddenly overtaken ladies of faſhion in the ſpring, the ſummer, nay, even the autumn of life.

Poor Maclean had no idea of ſtringing rhimes to celebrate the ſentimental and intereſting amours of the plants, but he could not paſs the verdant ſide of a hill without noſing it like a ſpaniel. In vain did he repeatedly obſerve his young lady waiting the reſult of his ſearch after the game he moſt coveted; a ſprig of heath, with a bloſſom or leaf varying from what he had hitherto ſeen, well rewarded his trouble, and encouraged him to proceed.

At length Roſella, extremely weary of this method of journeying, when ſhe ſaw him flying out of the road, demanded very exactly which way

way she ought to take when she arrived at the top of the next hill, or which path she ought to pursue when she reached the valley, and then walked forward, leaving him to overtake her when his aim had been, for that time at least, accomplished.

Maclean gladly received the indulgence which the good-nature of Rosella allowed him: but at length the load he had accumulated, not only in his pockets, but in his hat, in his waistcoat, and in his handkerchief, which he carried with great care in his hand, and the quick march he was often compelled to use, to rejoin his young lady, added to the warm rays of the sun, which seemed to have communicated its most glowing beams to his golden hair, made him look like those Warwickshire colliers who traverse the under-woods at night, with a blazing fire upon their heads. With him however, the fire consisted of the head itself; and his countenance, the natural expression of which was surprise from the elevation of his thick red brow, and consternation from the hanging of his immense under lip, now appeared so gorgon-like, that Rosella was struck with horror every time she turned her eyes upon him—and yet, like the head of Medusa, that of Maclean was so extraordinary, that it every moment attracted her regards.

As they approached Dunkeld, she began to feel some reluctance to enter the town with him, conceiving, not without some reason, that the figure of her conductor would procure her the honor of more attention than she wished to receive; but there was no remedy for the evil apprehended, except indeed that Rosella, in the hope of reducing the colour in Maclean's cheek bones, desired him to rest himself in a

grove of firs near the river, whilſt ſhe took a ſurvey of the town, and the beautiful country before her.

He was very glad to obey this injunction, from the violent heat and fatigue he endured: and Roſella, intending to let him remain half an hour where he had placed himſelf to arrange his treaſures, aſcended one of the hills with which Dunkeld is ſurrounded, and gazed with much pleaſure upon the meandering Tay, and its lovely banks; but her recollection was ſuddenly recalled to her attendant, by hearing a violent outcry, and beholding him at the ſame moment ſtruggling in the ſtream, by which ſhe had recommended it to him to repoſe himſelf.

She haſtily ran towards the unfortunate botaniſt, but without any diſtinct hope of aſſiſting him; and had the ſatisfaction to obſerve that he ſucceeded in extricating himſelf from his perilous ſituation, but with the loſs of his hat, his handkerchief, and the fruit of his eager reſearches.

Roſella enquired very earneſtly what had occaſioned the accident, and learned that maiſter Maclean inſtead of following her inſtructions, had been ſeeking for a peculiar ſort of *mentha aquatica*, and leaning too far over the bank, had felt a ſudden giddineſs, probably from the rays of the ſun darting upon his uncovered head, and the heated ſtate of his blood, which had cauſed him to loſe his balance, and plunge into the Tay.

The ſatisfaction which his eſcape from death occaſioned her, ſoon gave way to compaſſion for the ſhivering fits which now ſeized him; beſides the more immediate anxiety to get him to the houſe of Mr. Craufurd with as little obſervation as poſſible.

Roſella

Roſella haſtily wiſhed ſhe had been content to have endured the mortification of the poor fellow's attendance, before his unlucky immerſion had given the finiſhing touches to his appearance: but as it was, ſhe reſolved to wave all ſcruples of delicacy, and endeavor to ſpare him a fever, by proceeding without delay to Mr. Craufurd's, where ſhe concluded he would be relieved from his wet drapery, which did not hang about him with ſo much elegance as that of ſome ladies of ton, the labor of whoſe toilet conſiſts in putting on the appearance of very ſlender ſea-nymphs, juſt riſen from their coral beds.

Maclean led the way, refreſhing the earth as he paſſed on, with his dripping favors; whilſt Roſella followed, looking earneſtly in the eyes of thoſe ſhe met, to diſcover the opinion they formed of herſelf, and her conductor, who, on his part, bitterly lamented the cataſtrophe that deprived him of the weeds, roots, and rubbiſh he had collected.

Fortunately the habitation of Mr. Craufurd was near that part of the town at which they entered; and Roſella had the conſolation of reaching it, with only a moderate ſhare of gazing and conjecturing from thoſe who encountered her and her river god. But this momentary ſmile of fortune was quickly overcaſt, when ſhe learned that Mrs. Craufurd was not at home; and as ſhe had gone ſome miles out of the town with an intention of ſpending the day, Roſella could neither wiſh nor expect to be aſked to eat her dinner at the houſe;—yet as the maſter of it was not abſent, ſhe entreated permiſſion to reſt herſelf, and having given him a letter entruſted to her by her friend, ſhe ventured to mention the accident

that

that had befallen Maclean, in the hope that Mr. Craufurd would direct his ſervants to accommodate him; but he merely aſſured her that the hide of a Scotch peaſant was waterproof, and began reading his letter without giving the circumſtance a ſecond thought.

After the lecture, he offered her refreſhments, which ſhe refuſed, but was extremely unwilling to quit the place until Maclean could be ſuppoſed to have repaired the effects of his cold bath:—ſhe recollected however, the purchaſes ſhe had intended to make, and mentioned them to Mr. Craufurd, to account for her excurſion into the town; but he, happening to be one of thoſe perſonages, who in the abſence of a wife affects airs of gallantry they are far from having the courage to retain in her preſence, propoſed to have the honor of conducting ſo charming a young leddy; a politeſſe Roſella would willingly have excuſed, but that ſhe had no pretext for declining it. She entreated indeed that ſhe might not give him ſo much trouble, and profeſſed that ſhe ſhould be ſorry to take up ſo conſiderable a portion of his time; but theſe proteſts only furniſhed the gentleman with an opportunity of repeating ſome very flouriſhing comments upon her lovelineſs, which rendered any time employed in her ſervice, deleetfully plaiſant.

Roſella now felt ſo provoked and diſguſted, that ſhe would have left the houſe and the town immediately, had not her humanity been intereſted for Maclean; as it was, ſhe ſuffered Maiſter Craufurd to continue his harangues, and lead her to the ſhops ſhe had mentioned; and he then propoſed to himſelf to do the honors of the town to the fair ſtranger, entirely forgetting

forgetting that she might be already fatigued by her walk.

He took care to inform her, that Dunkeld was the principal mart of the Highlands—a circumstance she cared very little about: but she was obliged to survey with much apparent complacency, the noble seat of "Athol's Duke," which it contains, and the ruins of the cathedral, though in fact, she would at the same time have preferred the most incommodious seat in one of the peat-hovels she had passed in the morning, to have been released from the absurd strain into which Mr. Craufurd had wandered, which was the more remarkable, as he had hitherto appeared only in the character of a diligent and obliging *homme d' affaires*.

It was considerably past two when Rosella re-entered his house, and as she understood that the dinner was ready to be served up, she would immediately have taken her leave, but that he would not suffer her to express such an intention; and as she had not yet acquired, by an intercourse with the world, that firmness of denial which checks importunity, the loquacious entreaties of Mr. Craufurd at length silenced her excuses, and she sat down to his table exceedingly dissatisfied with him, and still more displeased with herself.

The cloth was scarcely removed, and Rosella was already meditating her escape the first moment she should find it feasible, when the lady of the mansion, without any previous notice, made her appearance.

"So, Mr. Craufurd," cried she, swinging open the door, and filling up the entrance as she flourished into the room, "I find you keep open house in my absence; people may walk into

into the office, and ruin you, before you know any thing of the matter."

Then perceiving Roſella occupying her ſeat at the head of the table, ſurpriſe and indignation choaked her utterance, and ſhe turned, with a look of ſuſpicious rage, towards her huſband, who had ſuddenly recovered his firſt character, and was once more the booing and vara obſequious Maiſter Craufurd.

With a mien that deprecated the riſing ſtorm, he haſtened to inform her that his gueſt was Miſs Beauclerc's young friend, who had walked from the cottage with a letter from that gude leddy, and had been much vexed and chagrined in not finding Maiſtreſs Craufurd at home.

Maiſtreſs Craufurd unknit her brow at this intelligence, for ſhe had not immediately recognized Roſella; and whilſt the ebbing of the moſt indignant ſenſations ſtill marked her countenance, ſhe forced it into a grin, and proteſted that what with her ſurpriſe at the honor Miſs Montreſor had conferred upon her, and what with the diſappointment ſhe had experienced, at finding the friend ſhe had viſited, too ill to keep her and the reſt of the party to dinner, ſhe hardly knew what ſhe was about: an aſſertion ſhe immediately verified, by whiſking her cloak from her ſhoulders with ſuch a graceful circuitous motion, that it carried two or three wine glaſſes, and a deſſert plate from the table, to which ſhe had unfortunately advanced when Roſella roſe to ſalute her.

The poor lady, beholding the devaſtation ſhe had committed, made a violent effort to laugh at the accident, calling at the ſame time upon Mr. Craufurd to wonder at her ill-luck throughout the day; but he, gude mon, was much

much more occupied in reflecting that the black cloud of his wife's displeasure, which was passing over the head of her handsome guest with such difficulty of retention, would inevitably burst upon his own with a fury entirely irresistible.

"Well, my dear," continued Mrs. Craufurd, "I am glad you had your dinner sooner than ordinary, because I dare say this young lady was not sorry to sit down to a good joint, after her walk; but if you *had* staid your usual hour, I should just have come in pudding time, which is what I thought to myself as I came along: but I began the day with ill-luck, and so I shall go through with it!"

"I am very much concerned," said Rosella, whose color had heightened during the speech, "that I——"

"Oh dear, don't say a word, Miss Montresor; it could not be any fault of your's, you know: if any body is in fault, it's Mr. Craufurd!" and then followed an attempt to make this hint sound like a badinage, by an hysterical giggle.

"Will ye have the claith laid," said the implied culprit, who was anxious to divert the attack, "and arder something to be gat?"

After a pettish refusal, she complied: and Rosella, who was now really uneasy lest she should not be at home before the twilight overtook her, had the mortification of seeing the mangled joint re-appear, which the lady turned from side to side twenty times with extreme disgust, and then declaring that she could never endure tepid meat, dismissed it with an order to bring in the cold pie:—ill luck again! the pie was entirely demolished!

"Well

"Well then I muſt faſt!" exclaimed ſhe, half crying. "Will you have ſomething dreſſed, my dear?" enquired Mr. Craufurd, in a compaſſionating tone.

"No: when once I am ſet againſt victuals, I do not care for any thing."

This refuſal being deciſive, the huſband would not venture to preſs the ſubject further, and a ſilence of a few minutes enſued, which Roſella took advantage of, and roſe from her ſeat with a farewel compliment.

"I am afraid," ſaid Mrs. Craufurd, half repenting her incivility, yet more than half inclined to add to it by further rudeneſs, "I am afraid, Miſs, that I ſhorten your viſit?"

Roſella was doubtful in what light this ſpeech was to be conſidered; and whilſt ſhe gazed at the lady in ſome aſtoniſhment—

"I am ſure, Miſs Montreſor," continued ſhe, "I ought to beg your pardon; but if you had felt as uncomfortable as I did—dear me, are you going ſo ſoon?—well—pray preſent my beſt reſpects to the good lady at the cottage, and pray tell her I hope ſhe will think of her promiſe, and come ſoon—that is, drop in in a friendly way, as you have done, and partake our family dinner—you ſee how we live—"

"I do!" thought Roſella.

—"You ſee how we live, ſo pray now contrive to come with her, or elſe I ſhall think our little quiet way does not ſuit your taſte. We have always what you have ſeen to-day, a joint and a pudding—tell Miſs Beaucleic that is our bill of fare throughout the year: but even that, with a ſincere welcome, and a pleaſant countenance, is to me a feaſt!"

Roſella waited very impatiently for the end of this oration, but it did not appear in the leaſt

leaſt likely to terminate ſo ſoon as ſhe hoped, for the lady had now pitched into what ſhe called a good-humour, that is a talkative one; and it ſeemed as if ſhe ſuppoſed her loquacity was to efface every remembrance of previous ill temper—an idea ſhe had long been in the habit of indulging, for ſhe was one of thoſe dames who never feel thoroughly complacent towards their gueſts, until they are leaving the houſe.

Roſella having aſſented very readily to all ſhe uttered, and had the pleaſure of hearing that Mrs. Craufurd, being a native of South Britain, was her countrywoman, at length took courage to aſk for Maclean, who was produced, equipped in an old hat much too ſmall for him, which ſtuck upon the top of his head without covering much of his long hair, not yet nearly dried, ſo that it hung lank and ſtraight; and the *tout enſemble* gave him the appearance of a Puritan of the laſt century.

Mrs. Craufurd followed her fair gueſt to the ſtreet-door, ſtill entreating that ſhe would not fail to remind Miſs Beauclerc of the honor ſhe intended her, and repeating, that now Miſs Montreſor ſaw how they lived, ſhe hoped ſhe would often take a walk to Dunkeld, to dine with Mr. Craufurd and her, in their little quiet way: and not even contented with this, ſhe ſtood at her door, uttering ſentences of the ſame import, till Roſella was abſolutely out of ſight; who, until that fortunate moment arrived, thought herſelf obliged at every other ſtep, to turn round, and bow her acknowledgments.

Maclean followed in ſilence until they reached the ſpot where he had met with his miſadventure, and then, in ſpite of the expoſtula-

tions

tions of his young lady, he insisted upon kneeling by the side of the stream, and stooping over the steep bank that rose beside it, to obtain a root of the *mentha aquatica*———

"You certainly wish for another accident," said Rosella angrily, "or you would not act thus!"

"Mess," returned Maclean gravely, "I wad na but ha foond this for aw Guairdy and its Laird are worth: it's the *mentha hirsuta*; and thus Maister Meller descreebes it—Ment wi wharled fluors, aval, sawed, hairy leaves, and stomina langer na the patols.——Mess, I foond ance upon a time here in my ain coontra, the *mentha virticillata*, which Maister Meller says graws natrally by the seed of the reever Madway: and noo I'm luking———"

"For Heaven's sake," interrupted Rosella, "do not look just now for any thing but our shortest way home!"———

"And noo I'm luking for the *mentha palustris*."

By this time she had discovered, to her extreme terror, that Maclean was much intoxicated; and instantly formed the design of returning to Dunkeld, and hiring a conveyance to the cottage, which she despaired of reaching by his guidance:—but it was impossible to drag him from the back of his hobby horse, and as Rosella did not like the idea of revisiting the house of Mr. Crausurd, and was too timid to enter an inn-gate without an attendant, she very unwillingly proceeded, as well as she could, taking care not to leave her nominal conductor too far behind, as her humanity suggested a care in his behalf he was far from having himself.

With

With much difficulty and loſs of time ſhe had repaſſed more than half the way, and congratulating herſelf that the ſun was not yet ſet, ventured to repoſe herſelf a few minutes, whilſt ſhe waited the leiſure of Maiſter Maclean. The ſpot ſhe had choſen preſented on every ſide a ſcene ſo ſingularly beautiful, that Roſella forgot all her recent vexations whilſt ſhe contemplated it. The road bordered one ſide of a river, which rolled tumultuouſly over a bed of rocks, many of them riſing above its ſurface, and lying in ſuch numbers that they appeared to oppoſe the flowing of the ſtream, which collecting its waters to overcome the check, forced its way with a violent current, and formed caſcades, whoſe murmurs at a ſmall diſtance invited the wanderer to repoſe.

A meandering of the river overflowed a ſpace of lowland, and was yet ſhallow enough to leave a riſing ſpot uncovered, where a group of cattle were browſing, whilſt others ſtood mid-leg in the ſtream, enjoying its freſhneſs. As the quality of the capricious ſoil varied, Roſella beheld the naked cliff towering abrupt over her head, or the gentler riſe of the verdant hill, chequered with foliage: through the fiſſure of a rock, an immenſe pine had forced its once budding growth, and now hung oblique in waving terror over a cataract the ſame rock had formed below it.

Further on, the double chain of mountains appeared to meet each other; but before the perſpective cloſed, the eye of Roſella was directed by a vivid ſun-beam that darted through a break, to a bridge, compoſed of the body of a large oak, either felled by a tempeſt, or directed by human care, to croſs "high in air," from the ſummits of oppoſing cliffs: a rude

rude and irregular railing assisted the giddy passenger, who "maun na luk bot where his foot do tread," and at this moment a highlander was crossing the Alpine pass, whose tartan pladdie shone right gay in the reflection of the setting sun.

A pack-horse plodding through the bourn Rosella had just passed, was led, or rather dragged along by a Scotch lassie, who at every interval of persuasion and bastinado, neither of which she spared towards the animal, made the glen ring with a lively air, the burthen of which she often repeated—"Wad ye stay here out owre the day, ye pauky beastie!" and then followed a thump, with part of the song.

"He glower'd at me as he'd been daft,
"The loon trows that I'll hae him;
"Hoot awa I winna hae him;
"Nae forsooth I'll nae hae him:
"New hose and new shoon—"

"Ye're nae frisket trow! Ye wad let a mousie tak the road o'ye, ye idle carle!" and then another thump.

Rosella was much amused by observing her constant rotation of employment; but the girl's admonitions quickened her own recollection, and she started up to pursue her way, but could no where discover Maclean—a circumstance that alarmed her. She had now left the song-stress and her idle companion far behind, and her anxiety increased, for not a single being enlivened the scene, or appeared to answer the enquiries she was eager to make. She continued to advance however, and judged that she was not quite a mile from home, when she perceived a well-dressed man loitering in the path, who no sooner caught a glimpse of her, than he

he flew to meet her, and in a tone as familiar as if their acquaintance had been of long and approved growth, reproached her for having delayed her return to so late an hour.

"However," added he, "it has had one good effect; for those puppies, Estcourt and Povey, have sounded a retreat, and left me, who was much more desirous of the *rencontre*, than they were to exult at my superior fortune.

Rosella stood aghast at this strange address; and the intruder observing her consternation, resumed with the same easy air—

"Why you seem vexed at it! Surely you had not a design upon either of those blockheads? They are more capricious and absurd than Oberne, and to my certain knowledge, they are equally poor."

She experienced such a rapid succession of emotions during this second attack, and her mind was so divided between surprise, anger, fear, confusion, and resentment, that she remained immoveable. The voice and features of this familiar personage she recollected to have seen and heard before, but could not in the least remember where they had met her notice.

A suspicion crossed her mind that this adventure, as Miss Beauclerc would have called it, was of her contriving; and the idea, unconfirmed as it was, gave her such pain and mortification, that after an unsuccessful struggle with her sensations, the tears sprung to her eyes; but immediately endeavoring to recover herself, she eagerly pursued her way, passing by the stranger with so quick a motion, that he could not prevent it, though he instantly rejoined her.

She averted her head to get rid of her tears unperceived, as she expected they would merely excite ridicule; but he saw them.

"You

"You are unhappy!" exclaimed he, "Tell me truly, were you attached to Oberne!"

Roſella colored with indignation, and though a number of angry replies roſe to her lips, ſhe ſtill remained ſilent.

"Are you dumb?" reſumed he, ſnatching her hand.

She was much alarmed, and called out to Maclean, but with little hope that he would hear her.

"Oh, *à-propos*," ſaid her new acquaintance, "what have you done with your Eſquire? I expected inevitably to have had that dragon to charm to reſt, before I could get at you. What not a word yet? Do, charming—(what is your name)—let theſe ſhady groves, and this purling ſtream, ſpeak with paſtoral perſuaſion in my favor!"

His knowledge of her having had an attendant, confirmed the ſurmiſe that Miſs Beauclerc had planned, or at leaſt permitted, this diſtreſſing ſcene; and the eaſy aſſurance of the young man's manner, and the tenor of his language and converſation, which no one could miſtake, too well informed her in what light ſhe was regarded.

"Oh Heavens!" thought Roſella, "does every human being view me with the ſame contempt? Who will then reſcue me from reproach, ſince it is univerſally believed that I but too well merit it!"

Her companion continued talking with the ſame flippancy; but, abſorbed in reflections that occupied her whole ſoul, ſhe heard his voice without hearing the ſenſe of what he uttered, until his impetuoſity recalled her attention.

"No," cried he, detaining her, "you ſhall not proceed unleſs you anſwer me!"

She

She ſtarted as if ſhe had now obſerved him for the firſt time, and in great agitation begged he would ſuffer her to go on.

"Why do you not anſwer me?" repeated he.

"What am I to anſwer, Sir?" aſked Roſella trembling.

"Is is poſſible!" exclaimed he: "is this abſence of mind real or feigned?"

"You exceedingly diſtreſs me," ſaid Roſella, with a countenance that marked the truth f the aſſertion; "pray let me walk on."

"Well, you ſhall walk on, and I will renew my enquiry—how long have you left Oberne?'

"Left him!" repeated ſhe, ſtill more ſhocked. All the ignominy of the reports in circulation was now openly expoſed to her view, and almoſt ſinking with agony, ſhe exclaimed—"What will become of me?"

The gentleman appeared much hurt on ſeeing the tears guſh in torrents from her eyes, and apologized in a heſitating voice for having unintentionally given her pain.

"If what I now feel is ſimply pain," cried Roſella, acting the heroine without intending it, "what then is torture?"

"I entreat you will compoſe yourſelf," ſaid her officious companion, "I am in deſpair that I ſtumbled upon ſo unfortunate a ſubject."

What he might further have ſaid was interrupted by a loud hallooing.

"Confound thoſe ideots!" reſumed he, "they have turned back to ſeek me."—— Then obſerving the increaſed alarm of Roſella, who trembled, and turned very pale, "do not be terrified," he added, "they ſhall not inſult you."

The

The protection of a person who, notwithstanding what had passed, appeared much more rational and humane than the young men he had named, whatever mortification Rosella might feel at being in a situation to receive it with thankfulness, a little re-assured her, when she beheld Mr. Estcourt staggering towards her, with Povey hanging on his arm, vociferating her name, to which they tacked the most absurd epithets of childish endearment, accompanying their witticisms with loud peals of laughter, the violence of which threatened to overset the uncertain equilibrium they contrived to maintain.

"D—mn this fellow," exclaimed Mr. Estcourt, when he perceived in what manner Rosella was attended, "he has jockied us by G—d! Lesley, d'ye call this starting fair?"

"Curse his Brutus," continued the absurd Povey in the same strain, "we are ousted!—He has been doling out his sentiment, I know it, and now he will hoax us to the devil!"

"What say you my fair one?" resumed Estcourt, seizing the arm of Rosella, who shrunk from him with an expression of terror.

The young man he had called Lesley, had been whispering to Povey, and now interfered, telling the honorable gentleman that he was not half civilized enough to address a milk maid; and instantly disengaging Rosella from his rude grasp, he walked on with her. But Mr. Estcourt was not sufficiently intoxicated to endure this double insult without resentment, and he almost immediately followed, notwithstanding the pretended efforts of his friend Povey to retain him: for this reptile, though he did not dare enter into a discussion with the more moderate of the three, was far from desiring that the

the impertinence he had meditated towards Roſella, ſhould in the leaſt fail, and was pleaſed when the enraged Eſtcourt, contriving with ſome difficulty to impede her progreſs and that of her champion, vehemently demanded a parley, in a tone of defiance that predicted it was not to be an amicable one.

Roſella too much agitated to know what ſhe did, and expecting only indignity at his hands, gave him a ſudden puſh, and darting forward, did not ceaſe running until ſhe ſaw the cottage before her. She heard her perſecutors ſhouting violently when ſhe began her race, and ſuſpected that ſhe had driven Mr. Eſtcourt down a ſteep hill, on the edge of which he was ſtanding; for ſhe recollected that he ſtaggered, and thought ſhe had ſeen Leſley catch at him. Their not purſuing her gave coloring to the idea, and an inſtantaneous terror ſeized her, leſt the fooliſh young man ſhould be injured by the fall, and this new diſaſter imputed to her.

CHAP. VIII.

A myſterious manuſcript—muſical travels.

THE firſt perſon ſhe encountered on her return home was Maclean, who had not entered the houſe, but was buſily employed in a ſhed, near the flower-garden, arranging his newly-acquired treaſures: his compoſure and extreme unconcern for her fate, diverted the diſtreſs of Roſella in ſome degree, by exciting her anger; but ſhe choſe to confine it to her own boſom, leſt Miſs Beauclerc, on learning his negligence, ſhould reſent it by diſmiſſing him.

She found her whimſical friend ſeated as uſual at her writing-deſk, and though ſhe generally journalized herſelf into a violent fit of enthuſiaſtic heroiſm, Roſella had never beheld her ſo extremely elevated: indeed the exploits of the day, as ſhe delineated them, would have been almoſt ſufficient to have made of the moſt notable houſewife, a convert to the airy doctrines of ſentiment and romance: no wonder then that the rehearſal of ſuch pathetic and ſublime ſcenes ſhould almoſt give Miſs Beauclerc the mien of a *Princeſſe des couliſſes.*

She

She ſtretched her arms towards Roſella, exclaiming—

"Come to my boſom, child of my fondeſt affections, ſweet ſoother of thy mother's cares!"

Roſella was at preſent little diſpoſed to humour what ſhe ſuppoſed to be entirely a flight of fancy; yet ſhe advanced and received the ſalutation of Miſs Beauclerc, but without that effervescence of filial adoration the good lady fully expected, according to thoſe charming examples ſhe had ſo often wept at, of good-natured young creatures falling in a trance of fondneſs at the feet of thoſe heroic mamas, who determine to make up in careſſes and tenderneſs for the abſence of diſcretion.

"What ails my daughter?" demanded Miſs Beauclerc, in a voice of ſurpriſe, on obſerving her tearful eyes and dejected countenance.

"Oh madam!" ſaid Roſella, her heart burſting with emotion, "your favor has been moſt fatal to me! Yet I thank you moſt fervently for your long kindneſs, and I beſeech you to believe, that only one circumſtance could extort from me a wiſh to leave you, and that is, an earneſt deſire to recover the good opinion of the world."

"Is it poſſible," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, "that Roſella ſhould imagine her reſidence with her hapleſs mother can draw upon her the cenſure of this world, cruel as it is, of which ſhe ſeems in ſuch dread? But I will not reproach you, unhappy child; you are, I too well ſee, weary of this ſolitude!"

"If this place were really a ſolitude," interrupted Roſella, "I might have been happy in it—I could not then have been mortified and ſhocked by inſults which I am not ſuppoſed to

have a right to complain of, becauſe they appear well-merited."

"What inſults do you ſpeak of?" aſked the ſentimental lady with eager curioſity.

"My walk home," returned Roſella, "was interrupted by Mr. Eſtcourt, Mr. Povey, and another of Lord Morteyne's gueſts. I know not who could inform them of it, but they were well appriſed of my excurſion to Dunkeld, and I experienced from them the moſt contemptuous and inſolent treatment. A young man, a perfect ſtranger to me, but too well betrayed the extent of thoſe injurious reports in circulation! Dear Miſs Beauclerc, let me conjure you to return to Avelines!"

She made no reply; but riſing with an air of dignity, rummaged in an immenſe portable eſcrutoire, and produced a large bundle of papers, which ſhe put into the hands of Roſella.

"Theſe," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her eyes to heaven, and producing by the force of habit, a few tears, "theſe contain the hiſtory of my woes. Roſella, if you ſhould weep over the ſad and myſterious deſtiny of your mother, remember that you have planted a freſh dagger in her heart!"

Miſs Beauclerc then walked gravely to the door, and quitted the room, leaving Roſella contemplating in ſilence the writing on the cover of the packet ſhe held, which conſiſted of characters, blotted apparently with tears, to this effect—

"*Memoirs of the hapleſs Mother of Roſella.*"

She knew enough of the etiquette of heroiſm to be certain, that after ſuch an exit as Miſs Beauclerc had juſt made, it followed of courſe that ſhe muſt ſhut herſelf up in her chamber for

for an hour or two, and was vexed that she had provoked the catastrophe before the tea-table had been ordered; for in spite of her chagrin and anxiety, she was sensible of extreme fatigue: and the heat of the weather, joined to the violent exercise she had taken, had rendered her feverish and thirsty.

She acquiesced however, in her destiny, and having nothing better to do, opened the papers of memoirs which she really believed Miss Beauclerc had been amusing herself with composing, and read the following sentence:—

"When these lines meet the weeping eye of my Rosella, the hand that traces them will no longer be animated with sensation!"

The writing was that of her friend; and the agitated mind of Rosella conceived an apprehension so shocking, that without proceeding any further, she threw down the narrative, and all the letters which served to illustrate and authenticate it, and ran to the apartment of Miss Beauclerc in the utmost horror and alarm. But fortunately her fears were entirely erroneous, for the good lady sat very quietly by her bedside, absorbed in thought: she had had it in contemplation indeed, to throw herself upon her knees, and rest her face upon the quilt, but by some means the intention was laid aside, and contrary to her design, not renewed, so that upon the intrusion of Rosella, she was shocked at being surprised in so calm a state, when every waring passion should have been contending in her bosom.

Rosella stopped suddenly on beholding her perfectly safe and quite composed; and when she was asked why she had rushed with such eagerness into the room, she stood mute and confused, and retired without an explanation.

The

The lines which had given her this alarm, had been written by Miſs Beauclerc with the reſt of the packet, whilſt ſhe was confined by indiſpoſition at Warkworth; and as ſhe was extremely intent upon leaving behind her her memoirs, according to the eſtabliſhed uſage, ſhe forgot that it was poſſible ſhe could recover, or intended, if ſhe ſurvived, to have altered the introductory paragraph—a deſign that afterwards, in the multiplicity of her adventures, entirely eſcaped her memory. The circumſtance however, confirmed Roſella in her opinion that the whole hiſtory was equally fabulous; and inſtead of continuing to read it with avidity and intereſt, ſhe returned languid and liſtleſs, merely to put up the papers, and then ſat unemployed, ruminating upon the gloomy proſpects that preſented themſelves to her imagination.—If ſhe ſucceeded in withdrawing herſelf from the protection of Miſs Beauclerc, without being purſued by reproaches of ingratitude, and if, by retiring from notice, ſhe could ſilence the calumnies ſo cruelly affixed to her name, what had ſhe to look forward to, but a hateful reſidence, dull and unpleaſant aſſociates, who merely tolerated her becauſe ſhe paid her quota expence in their wretched eſtabliſhment?

She could not hope for any eligible change of ſituation from marriage: for what man, who was not actuated by the deſire of gaining her little property, would be hardy enough (excepting a hero in romance) to entruſt to her keeping his honor and his fame, when ſhe had been found unequal to the taſk of preſerving her own without blemiſh?

Theſe melancholy ideas of the future at length gave way to the embarraſſment of the preſent moment:—ſhe feared the reſentment of Mr.

Mr. Eſtcourt, and ſhe had read malice in the eye of Povey; but as ſhe had never offended him intentionally at leaſt, ſhe hoped her ſurmiſe was an unjuſt one; yet ſhe could not diſmiſs it from her imagination, either than the more cruel certainty that ſhe had been addreſſed as the caſt-off miſtreſs of Oberne.

She imagined, from the converſation of the young man called Leiley, that he knew Oberne; and a ſuſpicion croſſed her mind that her Iriſh acquaintance had himſelf given riſe to this injurious report, to excuſe to his gay companions the infatuation of having given ſo much time and attention to Miſs Beauclerc, who had rewarded him only by an abrupt diſmiſſion, and left him to repent at leiſure the expence and ridicule attached to his excurſion. Still however, ſhe could not but think that the character of Oberne was too open and ingenuous, to allow him even tacitly to countenance ſo horrible a falſehood, and at length ſhe acquitted him wholly of the charge, from a reviſion of his conduct.

It was entirely dark before the confuſion of her mind, and the various images that crowded upon it, allowed her to recollect that the lady of the houſe had not propoſed the uſual refreſhment of the afternoon—a refreſhment ſhe had ſo much required. At preſent however, ſhe felt too much indiſpoſed to wiſh for any thing more earneſtly than repoſe; and ringing for Nancy, deſired that ſhe would inform Miſs Beauclerc when ſhe deſcended to ſupper, that ſhe had a head-ach, and was gone to bed, which ſhe immediately retired to her own chamber to do.

But the agitations of the day were not yet over with poor Roſella. Nancy followed her,

and

and whilſt ſhe aſſiſted her to undreſs, wept bitterly; and after relating the effects of Menie's ſtupidity and awkwardneſs, ſaid they were both to be turned away. Roſella promiſed to intercede for them, and the girl then found ſpirits to relate diſaſters in which ſhe had no ſhare.

"I wiped the chairs, and waſhed the carpet as well as I could," continued Nancy; "but I wonders you didn't ſee the kindition they was in! But Lorrk, Miſs! when you coom'd home, did you go into the mooſic-room?"

On receiving a negative, the whole hiſtory of Lord Morteyne's viſit was amply diſcuſſed, as far as it had reached her knowledge through the information of Menie, who told her that Sawney ſaid the Laird of Guairdy was not mad, but the Laird ſaid her miſtreſs was mad; for ſhe had locked him up, and ſwore never to let him go home to his Leddy, who was fainting away all the time, till he took wi him the young Miſs, and called her his ſiſter; and her miſtreſs wanted to give him all her fortune to make him ſay ay, and had tied him to a chair, and locked the doors; but the Laird fought deſpartly, and tore the houſe down, and got away.

So abſurd a ſcheme, and ſuch frantic proceedings, would certainly not have gained any credit with Roſella, but for the teſtimony Nancy ſpoke of, of the demoliſhed window and frame, and that ſhe was too well aſſured of the truth of the *Laird's* aſſertion, that the mind of her unfortunate friend was actually deranged.

Nancy's portrait of the confuſion at Guairdy, in the firſt moment of alarm, and the univerſal merriment which ſucceeded it, almoſt annihilated her. Well might the unfeeling Mr. Eſtcourt regard her with contempt and deriſion, if he imagined

imagined she had the remotest knowledge of Miss Beauclerc's plan.

After Nancy had tortured her for near an hour, with every minute circumstance she could think of to swell the tale to yet greater importance, she at length bade her agonized auditor good night: but the wish was of little avail—no sleep could visit those eyelids, which the keenest anguish forbade to close. The stillness of night could not bring repose, and the dawn of another day was still more unwelcome.

It occurred to Rosella that she might learn, through Menie, whether those apprehensions were just, which tormented her by representing Mr. Estcourt falling from the mountain side, mangled by the jutting craigs that threaten the unwary traveller whose foot should stray from the beaten path; and she resolved to be relieved from her fears, or at least to ascertain if they were founded, by the intelligence of the Scotch lassie.

At the usual hour she descended to the breakfast room, with an aspect so sad and so wan, that Miss Beauclerc was terrified, and forgot her memoirs, her displeasure, even her heroism in the shock she received: she embraced Rosella with the utmost fondness, and seeing the tears fall from her heavy eyes, her own accompanied them.

"My dearest child," exclaimed she, "you are ill! I was unkind last night; forgive me, my own Rosella; I was wounded to the soul by observing that you wished to leave me.—Forgive me, and regain your health, regain your sweet vivacity, and I will quit this place if you still desire it."

"Will you promise me, dear Madam," said Rosella eagerly, "to return to Avelines as soon as possible?"

"Oh my daughter!" resumed Miss Beauclerc, relapsing into the strain Rosella contemned, "I cannot wonder that you are earnest to quit the environs of Guairdy! But if it will restore your lost happiness, I will engage to do so."

This unhoped-for concession cheered the invalid; but it could not immediately recal the bloom to her cheeks, or the brilliancy to her eye; and when the breakfast was removed, she returned to her chamber, whither Miss Beauclerc accompanied her to assist in putting her to bed, as the pain in her head still continued very troublesome, and she was conscious of want of rest.

This indisposition however, spared her the knowledge of a circumstance that would have inflicted far greater pangs; for Miss Beauclerc had scarcely left her, and returned to the portico-room, when a very large package was announced from Mr. Craufurd. As she did not expect any piece of furniture, she could not divine what it might be; and having heard that Maclean pronounced it impossible to get it into the house, as the doors were far from being lofty, the lady, with much curiosity, walked into the poultry-yard, where it had been deposited.

Her surprise, on beholding the harp-case of Rosella, was not of long duration, as she almost immediately comprehended that her obliging Selina had had it conveyed to her, and guessed what her intention had been in this impromptu act of friendship.

Had she been at a loss however, the precaution of Mrs. Ellinger had been such, that her project would not have lain dormant;—for Miss Beauclerc espied a letter under the card of address,

addreſs, which ſhe eagerly tore off to ſeize her prize. After reading the firſt lines, "I ſuppoſed ſo!" ſaid ſhe aloud.—Then enquiring how the package had arrived from Dunkeld, ſhe learned that it had been placed on the back of a ſtrong pack-horſe, ſupported the whole way in a kind of equipoiſe, by her own errand-boy, and one of his comrades, becauſe it was urgently directed to be forwarded without delay, and Mr. Craufurd had not been able to get any other conveyance.

The many diſaſters the poor harp had met, *chemin faiſant*, with this mode of carriage, the Scotch lads were very prudently ſilent about, ſo that Miſs Beauclerc, ſuppoſing it to be a very good contrivance, reſolved that it ſhould proceed in the ſame ſtate to Guairdy, which was its goal and deſtination. She retired to write a note of renunciation to Lord Morteyne in the name of Roſella, and after many attempts to climax the ſublime and beautiful, determined to ſend the following billet:

"MY LORD,

"I addreſs you not in the ſuppoſition that my feeble pen can, by aſſurances of compaſſion the moſt ſympathizing, carry balm to your wounded ſoul! Heart-ſtruck as no doubt your Lordſhip is, from the torturing conviction that you have caſt from you a lovely roſe to bind a thorn to your breaſt, you claim my pity—that of the gentle angel, whoſe peace you have ſo cruelly ſtabbed, has ever been yours. I mean not, however, to reproach, but conſole you—you have my forgiveneſs, and may the cup of Lethe be your's!

"The

"The perſon who delivers this, has in charge a memorial Roſella Montreſor can now no longer retain of your former attachment: pardon me if I hint that you ought not to preſerve it in your poſſeſſion, as it has once been in her's, that you may not introduce the bitterneſs of jealouſy into a boſom whoſe quiet ought now to be your care.

"Excuſe, my lord, the liberty I take in appearing to adviſe, and believe that I am

"Your lordſhip's ſincere friend,

"S. BEAUCLERC."

Perfectly ſatisfied with this heroic performance, ſhe folded, directed, ſealed, and delivered it to Maclean, who was to be one of the ſupporters, and ſhe meant that her errand-boy ſhould have been the other; but it was found, on enquiry, that his comrade and himſelf had returned in great haſte to Duukeld, upon the back of the extra horſe, becauſe Nancy had unexpectedly diſcovered that ſhe had arrived at the end of her wheaten bread, and that unleſs ſhe diſpatched Jamie in a trice, ſhe ſhould not have any to produce at dinner.

There remained however, the little animal that uſually peregrinated to the town and back again; and the impatience of Miſs Beauclerc to ſend off her *chef d'œuvre* of a note, would not admit of delay. Maclean therefore, aided by Menie, after many uſeleſs efforts, contrived to place the harp and caſe upon the back of the hobby, who bent under its weight.

Yet Maclean could not undertake the care both of the beaſt and the burthen without aſſiſtance, and Menie was very prompt to offer her's quite

quite on tull Guairdy; and her Lady was ſo much pleaſed with her on this occaſion, that ſhe was reinſtated in her good opinion, and her fault forgotten.

The harp then renewed its travels, the little horſe trembling under its uncouth load, Maclean ſupporting the head of the inſtrument, and Menie the foot; and thus they jogged on very quietly, looking like the conductors of ſome curious preſent from a Sultan to a favored Sephi.

Sometimes, if the road was too much of an inclined plane, he or ſhe, who had the lower end of the ſtaff, called to the other to lean all their weight upon the contrary ſide; and Menie having once ſquatted herſelf upon the huge machine ſhe was far from comprehending the uſe of, with her naked feet dangling in idleneſs, found it ſo agreeable to ride, that ſhe propoſed to Maclean to follow her example, never once reflecting upon the inability of the poor little animal to carry the whole party. Indeed, as ſhe was no great reaſoner, ſhe had no idea that their gravity would deſcend to the back of the poney, if they ſat at the extreme angles of its burthen, but though it would merely centre in the pauky toad of loomber.

Maclean continued however, to walk, and deſired her likewiſe to deſcend, but without making her comprehend why it was neceſſary.

After many hair-breadth eſcapes, and much exertion of ſtrength, they arrived at the end of their journey, no doubt very much to the ſatisfaction of the poor little horſe, which was no ſooner deſcried from afar, accoutred in ſo ſtrange a manner, and Maclean and Menie both recognized as the domeſtics of the mad lady, than the ſervants at the park ran out to diſcover

cover what new freak, to uſe their phraſe, was in the wind.

The affair was ſoon communicated from the *tiers-etat* to the ſecond *etat*, commonly called the ſecond table, and from thence it mounted as rapidly to the *etat majeur*, conſiſting of my Lord, my Lady, and their aſſociates; and in a few minutes the whole houſe was diſgorged of inhabitants of every claſs, who eagerly flocked round the deputation, in full hope of ſome extraordinary event.

Lady Lucy was chagrined, and her brother angry; but curioſity, and a ſtrong inclination to be amuſed at any rate, would not ſuffer a ſingle ſoul to attend to repellant miens and grave faces; and when Lord Morteyne ordered his ſervants to retire, they merely formed a more ſpacious ring round thoſe who were not to be commanded to a diſtance.

Maclean delivered the letter in great form; and whilſt the Laird was reading it, his male gueſts had diſincumbered the poney of its load, and finding a key ſealed and tied to a cord, they diſengaged it in a moment, and opening the caſe, diſplayed to the eager eyes of the ladies a moſt coſtly and ſuperb harp, a little the worſe however, for the tour it had made.

Lady Morteyne now looked grave, and changed colour: ſhe well remembered to have ſeen the inſtrument at the houſe of her Lord, one morning that ſhe called unexpectedly upon Lady Lucy, and ſhe had ſuppoſed that it was deſigned for her; but when days and weeks paſſed by, and the transfer had not been made, to her at leaſt, ſhe felt diſappointed, and rather alarmed that ſo magnificent a preſent ſhould have been made to any lady but herſelf, for ſhe knew it was no longer in the

the poſſeſſion of Lady Lucy. But the preparations for her nuptials, which immediately followed, and the certainty of her noble lover's fidelity, ſoon baniſhed the circumſtance from her mind, where it would probably never have been revived, but for this heroic fancy of Mrs. Ellinger.

Lady Lucy perceived the emotion of her fair ſiſter, and in her extreme earneſtneſs to explain without appearing to explain, became ſo confuſed, that ſhe added to the latent ſuſpicion ſhe meant to repreſs.

Delamere, who was preſent, was wholly at a loſs to comprehend the reaſon of the double embarraſſment he obſerved, and Lord Morteyne, entirely diſconcerted by the accuſations and obliging compaſſion of his correſpondent, ſuddenly retired; whilſt Mr. Leſley employed his whole attention in endeavouring to diſperſe the aſſembly, becauſe he wiſhed to hold a parley with Menie or Maclean without ſo many auditors. He reminded Captain Povey that poor Eſtcourt was alone, and turning ſuddenly to ſome others of the party, he enquired, with an affectation of earneſtneſs, if the game had been decided, and if he had loſt or won his bet. His addreſs ſucceeded; for Povey thought he was compelled to take the hint; and the reſt of the men, who had quitted the billiard-table, having ſatisfied their curioſity, returned thither in the hope of ſatisfying their avarice.

Lady Morteyne likewiſe retired, followed by her ſiſter and her female viſiters, ſome of whom had obſerved, with keen eyes, all that had paſſed, and hoped to extract a little gratification from the implied jealouſy of the woman whoſe good fortune they envied.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A moon-light walk productive of alarm in vulgar minds—a meeting.

WHILST this ſcene paſſed at Guairdy, Roſella, happily unconſcious of it, was endeavouring to recruit her health and ſpirits, which had both been much diſcompoſed from anxiety and vexation: ſhe felt the promiſe Miſs Beauclerc had made, very efficacious in ſoothing the agitation ſhe had experienced, and eagerly anticipated the moment when ſhe might attempt her own vindication in the opinion of her ancient friend, Mr. Mordaunt, and ſolicit the continuance of his friendſhip, which at a time ſo critical, might form the future colour of her life.

She found herſelf unable to ſit at the dinner-table, and therefore remained in her chamber the whole day, where Nancy ſeized the opportunity of Miſs Beauclerc's abſence, to inform her that Menie had heard at Guairdy, that the Laird's brother had broke his arm and almoſt killed himſelf, and that another gentleman had given her half-a-guinea only to tell him how her young lady was—a largeſſe ſo provoking to Nancy's envy, that ſhe entreated very earneſtly of

of Miſs Montreſor if ſhe choſe for to ſend back a civil word or two to the gentleman, ſhe would make her the meſſenger.

At another moment Roſella might have laughed at her ſimplicity, but at preſent it excited her impatience and anger ſo much, that ſhe diſmiſſed Nancy in tears, which flowed however, as much for her diſappointment, as for the fault for which ſhe was reprehended. Her diſgrace prevented the diſcloſure of the harp ſtory, and had therefore the good effect of preſerving Roſella from an increaſe of mortification and diſtreſs, which the knowledge of Mr. Eſtcourt's accident, and the donation of the half-guinea to Menie, had revived.

The following day her head-ach and the ſlight fever that had accompanied it, left her, and ſhe ſat with Miſs Beauclerc, who was pleaſed to ſee her recovered, but gave no indication of an immediate removal to Dunkeld, as a preliminary ſtep to an Engliſh journey; and Roſella was chagrined to obſerve that no movement or preparation was made for their departure from the cottage.

In the evening Miſs Beauclerc propoſed that ſhe ſhould walk with her in the grove near the houſe; but the invitation was declined, as Roſella feared to meet either the Guairdy family, or any of their gueſts, in the company of her whimſical friend, as ſhe thought it too probable a ridiculous ſcene might enſue, to the abſurdity of which ſhe would become the principal victim.

Miſs Beauclerc, whoſe ideas were at that moment too enlarged and noble to ebulliate without inconvenience under any roof but the high-arched one of heaven, was therefore obliged to march forth by herſelf, fully reſolved to

to see what wonders patience, midnight, fortune, and a pale moon, would work for her.—She was determined to pace the lawn before the house of Lord Morteyne—a ceremony which ought to have been exclusively performed by Rosella; but as her flighty friend despaired of inducing her to undertake it, she thought the next best thing was to perform it by proxy.

In the interim Rosella, who little imagined the employment her timidity had compelled Miss Beauclerc to engage in, waited her return, after the clock had struck ten, in great anxiety; and in another hour her consternation increased so much, that she sent Menie to bring Maclean to her. He had retired to a cottage where he slept for want of room in that of his Lady, and had long been in bed when Menie, with Nancy in her suite, who was too much frightened to be left alone, endeavoured to rouse him from his gentle slumbers by the rural salutation of gravel at his window: but he was dreaming of having found three or four new genus of plants, and of becoming a greater and more celebrated personage than Linnæus himself; and Menie had much difficulty, as no doubt many others have, in awakening a man from a very pleasant delusion.

Rosella, restless from the impression of her fears, and wishing to do something without exactly knowing what, ran to call Nancy, that they might proceed to the grove together and search round the house, from a dread that Miss Beauclerc might have fallen into a fit, and be lying without succour: but she discovered that Nancy had vanished, after having in vain visited every part of the house to find her; and the horror that seized her mind increased, on ascertaining that at such an hour she was alone in the

the houſe, which had not one door or window ſhut throughout it.

At this moment ſhe heard the trampling of horſes very near, and ran to the portico, on which ſide the ſound came, to deſcry the intention of the riders: there ſhe could plainly diſtinguiſh the voices of men in converſation, who neither paſſed on, nor gave any ſignal that they wiſhed to be diſcerned by the inhabitants of a dwelling they ſeemed to ſurvey with an intention the terrors of Roſella could well divine.

With trembling haſte ſhe faſtened the outward door, and cloſed the windows, and then flew to the thatched entrance to endeavour to ſecure that likewiſe; but as ſhe crept, ſcarcely breathing, towards a gate that terminated it, and which alone could render it ſecure from intruders, ſhe found that it had already been invaded, from the ſound of a ſtep almoſt as cautious as her own, which appeared to meet her; at the ſame moment a voice exclaimed, in an under tone—

"Menie, is it you?"

Roſella was now relieved of a part of her terrors; ſhe ſtill trembled however, though ſhe ſuppoſed the man, whoever he might be, was merely a lover of the damſel he had miſtaken her for: but as he continued to advance, ſhe ſuddenly retreated into the muſic-room, where the lights were burning on the ſupper-table.

For a moment all was quiet; yet Roſella, ſtill under the influence of her panic, ſtood gazing at the door through which ſhe had entered, and at length fancying ſhe heard a whiſpering in the paſſage, ſuſpected that Menie was not unconcerned in the protracted abſence of Miſs Beauclerc, and that the purpoſe of the intruder

was

was not love, but rapine: but amidſt many wild conjectures, ſhe was far from gueſſing that the man ſhe had fled from was then intently ſurveying her through the crevice of the unſhut door; and as her eyes were fixed with an expreſſion of diſmay upon it, he very naturally concluded he was ſeen, and entering the room, diſplayed the figure and features of Mr. Leſley.

Roſella ſtarted at an object ſo unlooked-for, and retreated as he advanced, with a dread ſo marked, that he thought it neceſſary to aſſure her ſhe had nothing to fear, before he attempted to excuſe his appearance at ſo late an hour, in a houſe he had no title to enter even at a leſs improper time.

He informed her that, having heard on the preceding day from one of her domeſtics that ſhe was indiſpoſed, he had taken the liberty of ſending to the ſame perſon in the morning, in the hope of learning that ſhe was recovered; for though he much wiſhed to convey his apologies to her for the impertinence of his conduct, he did not intend to give her the trouble of attending to them until ſhe was reſtored to her accuſtomed health; that he had intimated to the young woman, that he ſhould paſs the houſe in the evening, and would entreat her to tranſmit a letter from him to her young lady, but having been detained at Dunkeld to the preſent hour, he had ſuppoſed it too late to execute his intention, until the lights he had ſeen in the lower apartments had induced him to venture with his billet, which he was far from being certain that the girl would have undertaken to deliver, and that he wiſhed to ſpeak to her himſelf, rather than entruſt the commiſſion to a ſervant, becauſe the ſucceſs of it was of importance to his happineſs.

Roſella,

Roſella, who well recollected the ſtory of the half-guinea reward, did not believe this exculpation, lame as it was, eſpecially when ſhe compared it with the manner in which the queſtion had been aſked of—" Menie, is it you?" and ſhe thought it was much more probable that Menie had conſented without ſcruple to the requeſt of a loan of her good offices; ſhe did not chuſe however to appear to doubt any part of the aſſertion, but very heartily wiſhing her viſiter away, ſtammered ſomething, ſhe ſcarcely knew what, expreſſive of her expectation that he would leave the houſe.

" I will go immediately," returned he; " but may I hope you will do me the honor to admit me to half an hour's converſation to-morrow? If it ſhould be inconvenient to ſee me here, perhaps you would prefer a walk in the Park—"

" No, Sir," interrupted Roſella indignantly: then ſuddenly reflecting that ſhe was ſtill unprotected by the vicinity of a ſingle being, her terrors returned, and Mr. Leſley perceiving that ſhe was offended, was beginning a ſecond apology, when a noiſe at the door of the portico interrupted it, and he haſtily left the houſe, after having conjured her to ſuffer him to ſpeak to her in the Park the next morning.

He had not been gone two minutes before Nancy ruſhed into the room, with a very pale aſpect, vowing ſhe had met a robber with a piſtol and a blunderbuſs, and ſhe had ſuppoſed he had killed her miſtreſs, and ſtripped the houſe—

" Oh Lord, Miſs!" continued ſhe, " do let me ſtay till Menie and Maclean come in, if it's on my bare knees do let me ſtay here, for I'm ſure there's more ne he that rooned away, and

and I ſhall be murdered all alone by myſelf, and ſo will you, if I go away from you !"

Roſella very readily conſented, though not juſt then from the fear of being murdered; and immediately enquired if ſhe had found Miſs Beauclerc, or called up Maclean.

Maclean was coming, ſhe ſaid, and he would find her Lady, for he knew every creek and corner round the place; but for her part, ſhe never could abide going out after dark.

The anxiety of Roſella now redoubled; it was now near twelve o'clock, and ſhe even regretted that ſhe had not endeavoured to intereſt Mr. Leſley in the ſearch ſhe had meant to begin, both in perſon and by her emiſſaries, as ſoon as they arrived.

It was almoſt ten minutes from the entrance of Nancy, before Menie appeared, yet this delay was not for lack of ſpeed, as ſhe had quite loſt her breath with running; but Roſella diſcovered that after her companion and herſelf had ſucceeded in making Maclean underſtand the purport of the embaſſy, they had returned together, but had been frightened by the ſhadow of a buſh they had encountered in their way, and Nancy ſpringing by it with the elaſticity of terror, called to Menie to follow her example, which ſhe ſo far overcame her prejudices as to do but in the effort, feeling one of the twigs of the fatal buſh ſtrike againſt her petticoat, ſhe thought the evil ſpirit had ſeized her, ſo ſhe fell down from fear, and lay ſome time with her eyes cloſed, till Nancy's ſtep could no longer be heard, and then, rather than be left all alone with the ſpectre, ſhe ſtarted up in deſperation, and followed with all her might.

The party was ſoon rendered complete by the arrival of Maclean; and Roſella had regulated

lated the movements of the campaign she was going to undertake; Maclean singly composing one column of her army, and the two damsels and herself the other, when the return of Miss Beauclerc prevented the execution of their design, and lulled their fears to repose.

The good lady had, according to her intention, walked the lawn before the house at Guairdy, without perceiving a light in any window, or a single being either in the dwelling, or about the dwelling: a circumstance so extraordinary, that she almost thought it the effect of supernatural agency misleading her senses, for, like other heroines, Miss Beauclerc extremely condemned in theory the folly of believing in the spiritual visitations of unembodied gentle folks, but most devoutly subscribed to the doctrine in private.

Having at length wearied herself almost past endurance with perambulating to and fro, without any indication of an approaching adventure, she thought it would be proper, *selon l'usage*, to explore the burial-place belonging to the mansion, where she had little doubt of being able to penetrate into the most ancient vaults of the deceased Nobles, and making some notable discovery worthy of record; but in this she was equally disappointed—the catacombs at Guairdy were very unhandsomely, kept invariably under bolt, padlock, lock and key, besides very heavy mural entrenchments; and the person who was entrusted with the care of the place of worship which contained them, being neither subject to madness nor extreme intoxication, it was impossible to *wander* at midnight in the awful space appropriated to the deceased family of Estcourt, and examine with sublime horror their mouldering skeletons.

Miss

Miſs Beauclerc, provoked at the unneceſſary formality with which theſe matters were arranged, when ſhe wiſhed, and had ſuch good authority for expecting it would be otherwiſe, returned home before the "witching time," and thus prevented the ſearch her houſehold were ſo anxiouſly and dutifully ſetting on foot for her.

Maclean was diſmiſſed, the doors and windows of the houſe ſecured by the direction of Roſella, and the ladies then ſat down to a light ſupper, which Miſs Beauclerc was not averſe to, becauſe at that moment ſhe had not any very ſublime occupation for her mind.

The next morning was fated to produce a diſcovery not very agreeable to her, however gratifying it might be to her young companion. They learned that the whole bridal party had abruptly left Guairdy, with the exception of Mr. Eſtcourt, who could not yet be removed, and a friend who conſented to remain in the deſerted manſion, to amuſe the invalid.

This kind friend Roſella had reaſon to believe was Mr. Leſley; and ſhe augured nothing good, to herſelf at leaſt, from this ſuppoſed proof of humanity, which vanity and apprehenſion whiſpered ſhe might have a conſiderable ſhare in.

Again Miſs Beauclerc invited her to walk in the grove, or the park; but Roſella, recollecting the impertinent requeſt of the young man on the preceding evening, ſteadily declined it in ſpite of entreaty or perſuaſion: an obſtinacy that rather offended her friend, who might perhaps have inſiſted upon her compliance, had ſhe not ſuppoſed it improbable that ſhe could encounter any adventure, Mr. Eſtcourt being confined to the houſe, and his companion ſhe

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed to be either a dependant chaplain, or a led Captain, who would not preſume to ſtir from his elbow.

Roſella, in her abſence, lectured Menie very gravely upon her facility in liſtening to the requeſts of the ſtrange gentleman; and Menie proteſting that ſhe meant nae hairm, vowed, with a ſhower of tears, that ſhe wad na mair hearken to ony thing he ſaud—a reſolution Roſella much commended: and ſhe was extremely ſurpriſed after having heard it, to ſee the girl preſenting her a letter, after ſhe had retired for the night, which the gentleman had made her tak, ſhe ſaid, though ſhe tauld him hoo angered her young leddy had been; but the gentleman tauld her he wad na do ony thing to anger the young leddy, aunly he told her to try gin the young leddy wad tak the lettre, and gin ſhe wad na, there wad be na hairm, and ſhe maun gie it him back.

"Well then," ſaid Roſella, much vexed, "give it him again; and be aſſured, Menie, if you ſpeak to me any more of this gentleman, or any other, I will complain of you to your miſtreſs."

Menie ſneaked away with the unfortunate letter in her hand, much alarmed at this threat, and mad wi the cunning loon, that had told her there was nae hairm, and almoſt loſt her her place.

Roſella, mortified by a purſuit that was far from reflecting honor upon her, counted every moment that paſſed over her head in a ſituation ſo expoſed; yet ſhe forbore to preſs Miſs Beauclerc to haſten her removal, ſince ſhe had learned that of Lord Morteyne, leſt it might be ſuppoſed that they followed him; and ſhe thought it would be more prudent to remain in

the cottage a few days at leaſt, to take from their journey the air of a purſuit.

But the next morning her opinion again varied, when her whimſical friend ſent to haſten her appearance at breakfaſt, with intelligence that a gentleman awaited her coming with impatience. Hope once more reviſited the boſom of Roſella, with the idea of the preſence of Mr. Mordaunt, and ſhe queſtioned Menie, who had been ſent to her, as to the age and appearance of their gueſt; but ſhe had not ſeen him, and Roſella hurrying down ſtairs, beheld, inſtead of her old friend, Mr. Oberne, who appeared ſo well pleaſed with the reception Miſs Beauclerc had given him, that he flew to greet her with all the animation the unchecked energy of his character produced: but Roſella received his ſalutation coldly, and the vivacity of Oberne vaniſhed; he endeavored however to rally his ſpirits, and gratified the vanity of Miſs Beauclerc by expreſſing much admiration of her retreat.

Roſella having recovered from her firſt ſurpriſe, began to revolve the means by which he had diſcovered it, and did not entirely exculpate her inconſequent friend from having herſelf given him the information: but this ſuſpicion was diſcarded, from the converſation that followed.

"This then is the paradiſe," continued Oberne, "from which ſuch poor devils as myſelf were to be excluded. You, Madam," addreſſing the lady of the manſion, "have ſo much complaiſance as merely to exhibit aſtoniſhment when I ſhow my recreant face; but Miſs Montreſor, who, to do her juſtice, never flattered me much, diſplays a far greater portion of conſternation than welcome."

"Perhaps,"

"Perhaps," said Miss Beauclerc, "she has reason to be dismayed, if she is to conclude that your society will in future be as injurious to her in its consequences as it has been hitherto."

Rosella, shocked at this opening, and fearing that these reports and suspicions, which she could not think of without the utmost confusion, would be discussed in her presence to the individual person who had given rise to them, was hastily quitting the room; but Oberne caught her hand, and entreated that she would listen to him.

"I am to conclude, I fear," cried he, "that what I have now heard is meant as a reproach: and how I am to endeavor to merit forgiveness I know not, since the censure passed upon me is not the result of my own misconduct, but of the detestable impertinence and injustice of others, over whom I have neither influence nor controul. But of this Miss Montresor may be assured, that though I could not prevent the insolence by which she suffers, I will at least avenge her."

The confusion and distress of Rosella now gave place to apprehension.

"For heaven's sake, Mr. Oberne," exclaimed she, "do not increase the misery I have suffered, by a rash resentment!—You may pacify your own indignation by pretending to punish my defamers, but you can only do me injury by appearing as my champion!"

"You know then," cried Oberne—but immediately checking himself, he addressed Miss Beauclerc. "Has Lesley," demanded he, "presumed to mention my name to you in a manner to shock your delicacy?"

"Who is Lesley?" returned she: "no person has entered this house but Lord Morteyne."

Oberne, turning haſtily to Roſella, ſaw her cheeks, which a moment before were unuſually pale, fluſh a deep crimſon—

" I ſee how it is," exclaimed he, " but he ſhall repent his treacherous villany !"

His eyes ſparkled with rage; and Roſella remembering his impetuoſity at Dumbarton, now trembled at the idea of the miſchiefs that might enſue.

" You terrify me," ſaid ſhe, burſting into tears. " Mr. Oberne, if you are really concerned for the odium you have undeſignedly attached to my name, you will not add to my diſtreſs by making me a further ſubject for the cenſures of the world."

" Roſella," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, " I grieve to obſerve that the momentary impertinence of a few envious women and idle men, ſhould make ſuch an impreſſion upon your mind: diſcard your fears, and think only with contempt of the hurtleſs ſlanders you ought never to have regarded !"

The lady as ſhe ſpoke, happening to caſt her eye upon the breakfaſt equipage, recollected that neither Roſella nor himſelf had taken any thing; and adviſing her with yet more energy to riſe above the faſtidious criticiſms of thoſe deſpicable beings who called themſelves the great world, ſhe invited Oberne to a ſeat on her right hand, and obliging Roſella to occupy another on her left, ſhe drank her tea with infinite compoſure, and declaimed upon the advantages of a fondneſs for ſolitude and retirement.

" For example," added ſhe, " my dear Roſella, ſpite of the malice of her perſecutors, could ſurely be contented with ſuch a cottage as this, and the ſociety of thoſe ſhe loves !"

" No,

"No, madam," replied Roſella, "not whilſt I imagine one ſingle being in the multitude I quitted, could affix to my conduct the ſlighteſt ſtain!"

"I adore your delicacy," cried Oberne eagerly, "and I think it is impoſſible that injuſtice can be extended ſo far as to deprive you for any time of that tribute of eſteem and veneration ſo much your due!"

"Pray," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, after a momentary reverie, "who is this Leſley of whom you ſpoke a few minutes back?"

"He is," replied Oberne, "the brother of Lady Morteyne: you may perhaps remember to have ſeen him in Edinburgh: I mean," added he haſtily, "that we paſſed him in the Canon-gate, on the morning you permitted me the honor of being your Cicerone."

Miſs Beauclerc aſſented: and Roſella now too well recollected that ſhe had likewiſe ſeen him, though not in the ſame place: for, in fact, Mr. Leſley was the young man who had been ſo unwilling to quit her at the door of the tavern, to which the Edinburgh coachman had unfortunately driven Miſs Beauclerc and herſelf after their excurſion to the theatre. She was ſurpriſed that the circumſtance had never before occurred to her, as ſhe had retained a confuſed remembrance both of his voice and features, and ſhe no longer felt aſtoniſhed that he had purſued her as he had done, or that he had thrown out thoſe mortifying hints relating to Oberne: but that he ſhould have the power to relate her Edinburgh adventure to Lord Morteyne's family, and his numerous gueſts, ſtruck her to the heart; a ſickening anguiſh aſſailed her, and her countenance gave indication of what paſſed within.

Oberne

Oberne saw the conflict, and endeavored to dissipate the pain he had unwarily occasioned, by every attention he could devise; but as it was easy to discover that his presence was unpleasing to her, he at length withdrew, in a temper of mind very well adapted to execute an intention he had secretly formed, of extirpating the unfortunate Lesley from the face of the earth. And whilst he was marching with hasty strides to Guairdy, Rosella employed the alternate persuasives of tears, representation, and entreaty, to induce Miss Beauclerc to hasten her departure from the cottage.

The good lady might have slighted the representation, and rejected the entreaty; but the tears of Rosella, reinforced by the certainty of retaining Oberne as a dernier resort for any future atchievement where an adorer must figure in the scene, determined her compliance, and orders were given to Nancy to pack up with all possible dispatch, as her Lady resolved their removal should take place the next morning.

Nancy had but two hours back acquired an admirer, who appeared to have dropped from the clouds on purpose to console her for the sudden departure of all the fine liveried and unliveried gentlemen she had heard Menie speak of as the satellites of the brilliant constellations at Guairdy; and looking aghast at this command, she stood motionless with grief and disappointment.

"As for Maclean, and that awkward creature I found here," continued Miss Beauclerc, "let them remain in the house; and I will give my agent at Dunkeld instructions concerning them.

"Yes

"Yes, Madam," ſaid Nancy, courteſying "and if you would pleaſe to think that I could do any good here, I ſhould like vaſtly to ſtay too!"

"You! no certainly not!" exclaimed her miſtreſs; "I ſhall take you with me to London."

"To London!—Oh criminal!" whiſpered Nancy, "there are plenty of ſweethearts to be had there, ſo I need not grudge to leave one behind.

With a mien entirely altered, ſhe promiſed, unaſked, to pack all night rather than not be ready; and Roſella, who was yet more deſirous than herſelf that her taſk ſhould be accompliſhed, volunteered her aſſiſtance, after having required directions of Miſs Beauclerc concerning the baggage to be taken with them.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

A parting—a rich relation non compos—and a careful heir.

ROSELLA had employed herſelf very diligently about two hours, and Nancy being then obliged to leave her poſt to attend to the menage, her ideas became more diſengaged, and ſhe recollected that it would not probably occur to Miſs Beauclerc to ſend to Dunkeld for a carriage. The apprehenſion of having their journey delayed even a day by ſuch a want of thought, made her haſtily quit her ſelf-impoſed taſk, and run down ſtairs to remind her of it.

Miſs Beauclerc was not however in either room; for being too ſublimely idle to aſſiſt in a buſtle, ſhe had taken her uſual walk. But as Roſella entered one door of the muſic-room, Oberne appeared at the other, and ſhe could not avoid the *téte-à-téte* chance had conducted her to.

"Dear Miſs Montreſor, deareſt Roſella," cried he, "how little did I divine the diſtreſs you are ſo cruelly compelled to encounter! I had no idea that the eccentricities I have remarked in Miſs Beauclerc were accompanied by

by occasional derangement, or I would not have quitted you at Luss, but for the purpose of giving your friends information of your unpleasant situation. Need I tell you how sincerely I participate in any uneasiness you endure? Will you not believe that whatever happiness I may have had during the time I spent near you, I repent the blindness which made me slight your more prudent repulse, and overlook the inability of your poor friend to decide how far it was proper to indulge my wish of remaining in your society? Tell me only what I can do to serve you, to whom I may apply amongst your relations or connexions, to snatch you from a situation which I fear injures your health."

Rosella was silent: she had indeed suspected, and was almost assured of the unhappy circumstance Oberne thus decidedly mentioned; but to have it confirmed so suddenly—to find that Miss Beauclere's unfortunate state of mind had been so far discussed at the house of Lord Morteyne, where she supposed Oberne had learned the intelligence, as to make it no longer a matter to be doubted, most sensibly shocked her.

Good God!" exclaimed he, "I seem to approach you only to inflict pain!—I have been too precipitate—you will hate the sight of me, and abhor the sound of my name! But surely you must have observed the misfortune I speak of? I have not been the first to announce it to you?"

"No," replied she; "I have already thought it but too possible: yet I will only thank you for your offers of service, without troubling you to fulfil them, as Miss Beauclerc has herself determined to return to her home; and

then," added Roſella, with a ſigh, " I ſhall be conveyed to mine !"

" But you cannot travel to England without any other protection !" ſaid Oberne : " if her dreadful malady ſhould increaſe whilſt you are upon the road, I ſhould tremble for you; the ſhock of ſuch an event would overwhelm you !"

" I muſt take my chance," returned Roſella, " for I have no friend in this country to whom I could apply upon any emergency, however preſſing ; and the beſt thing I can do, is to quit it as faſt as poſſible. But I muſt ſtill hope that this event is only temporary; I truſt it will go off when Miſs Beauclerc is ſettled in her reſidence, and no longer haraſſes herſelf by moving from place to place : if I had reaſon to imagine otherwiſe, I ſhould be ſtill more unhappy than I am at preſent."

" I will hope ſo too," ſaid Oberne ; " but I muſt return to the ſubject of my anxiety—I muſt repeat that you cannot travel alone with Miſs Beauclerc."

" Nancy goes with us !" interrupted ſhe.

" My dear Miſs Montreſor, of what ſervice would Nancy be to you or her miſtreſs, were any diſtreſſing event to take place, of which there is, at leaſt, a probability ?"

" I have already told you," replied Roſella, " that it cannot be otherwiſe ; and there is cruelty in placing dangers before my eyes which I have no power to avoid."

Oberne made no anſwer to this obſervation ; but, muſing a moment, ſuddenly aſked her when they began their journey.

" To-morrow morning," returned ſhe.

" So ſoon !—But I thank you for the information."

" You

"You do not mean, I hope," said Rosella, "to accompany us? Consider Mr. Oberne ——"

"I do consider," interrupted he; "I give far greater consideration to your welfare and interest, than I could ever prevail upon myself to bestow upon my own. I will follow you at a distance, but without giving up the power of assisting you, should you unfortunately require any aid: for I cannot suffer your delicacy to plunge you into difficulties I shudder to think of; nor could I endure the miserable anxiety I should otherwise be a prey to, lest you should sink under the distress I could so well imagine."

"I have no power to prevent you from acting as you please," returned she, "unless you will listen to my entreaties not to endeavor to alter my destiny, whatever it may be: but pardon me, Sir, if I say the trouble you mean to give yourself, though it certainly requires my acknowledgments, cannot, as I am situated, contribute to my interest or my welfare; and as to inconvenience or embarrassment, I regard them much less than the odium I might incur."

"You are resolved," interrupted Oberne, "that my cares shall be disinterested; by forcing me to perceive that they are entirely unacceptable, you are not reduced to the necessity of regarding me more favourably on account of my Quixotism."

"My mind is too much disturbed," said Rosella, "to allow me to excuse my obstinacy, as perhaps I might be able to do: but I cannot adopt another opinion, even though you should think me ungrateful—a charge I should of all others most abhor. Will you," she added, "inform me who gave you so confirmed an idea

idea of the melancholy circumſtance that introduced this ſubject?"

"I heard it from every body at Guairdy, with the accompaniment of ſuch facts, that I could no longer doubt, as I wiſhed to do."

"And was it from Guairdy too," ſhe aſked, "that you learned Miſs Beauclerc's preſent reſidence?"

"It was," replied Oberne: "why do you enquire?"

Roſella bluſhed whilſt ſhe anſwered in a heſitating accent, that it was of no conſequence.

"I underſtand you," ſaid he; "and I hope you will believe that I have endeavoured to efface any idea that contributed to draw upon you the impertinence I cannot think of with patience."

The entrance of Miſs Beauclerc now relieved Roſella from the confuſion ſhe ſuffered from a diſcuſſion ſo unpleaſant; and both Oberne and herſelf examined the countenance of the lady as ſhe accoſted them, with an attention they had never before thought of employing; but they could not obſerve any ſigns of diſcompoſure either in her features or manner: indeed ſhe was ſo well pleaſed to ſee the aſſiduities of Oberne, and found them ſo conſoling after the failure of the grand ſcheme ſhe had been at ſuch an immenſe expence to accompliſh, that his preſence gave her an air of placidity that could not be miſtaken.

Roſella, regarding the preſent moment as a lucid interval, was eager to advance their journey before the proſpect ſhould be again overclouded, and mentioned the neceſſity of ſending to Dunkeld for a poſt-chaiſe. As ſhe ſuſpected, the imagination of her luckleſs friend had been too much occupied to allow of ſuch a recollection;

tion; but Maclean was now dispatched upon the errand.

Miss Beauclerc invited Oberne to dinner; but he declined the intended honour, by saying he was engaged to return to Guairdy: an arrangement that better met the approbation of Rosella, who now retired to pursue the task she had imposed upon herself.

As she was emptying a drawer appropriated to herself, she took up the unread memoirs of her flighty friend, which she had deposited there: she felt a momentary curiosity to examine them; but fearing to encounter painful proofs of the derangement she deplored, they were placed with some things she valued, in a small case which had been assigned to her use. She was surprised Miss Beauclerc had never enquired if she had looked over them; but imagined, what was really the fact, that her poor friend had been so engrossed by the hurry of succeeding events, that she scarcely remembered the confidence she had reposed in her. In the same drawer a memento of her own forgetfulness met her eye, in an envelope addressed to Mr. Delamere, at Newcastle, whither she had first thought of sending the note; but on recollecting that there was a greater probability of his finding it at the Lodge, she altered her purpose, and using the first cover as waste paper, it now assailed her, and brought on the unpleasant remembrance that the value of the note was still due to Mr. Delamere, as he affirmed he had never received his own, and that she had suffered him to leave Guairdy without adjusting the affair.

She was sensible that Miss Beauclerc would not hesitate to relieve her embarrassment, by immediately advancing the money; but she felt

an

an invincible ſcruple in applying to her for ſuch a ſum, now that ſhe ſuſpected ſhe knew not the value of the property ſhe ſquandered with ſo profuſe a hand. Mr. Ellinger, ſhe was convinced, would never liſten to ſuch a demand upon her own ſmall income, as he had always rigidly denied her, from that ſource, every ſuperfluous expence, and had given her very frequent reprimands when he witneſſed any lapſe of prudence in the appropriation of the ſtipend he thought proper to allow her: but theſe circumſtances had never before made any very unpleaſant impreſſion upon her mind, becauſe every indulgence that an ample fortune and maternal fondneſs could ſhower upon a favoured child, had been her's through the attachment of Miſs Beauclerc.

She reflected with anguiſh how changed her proſpects were ſince ſix ſhort months! She recollected what a gay, thoughtleſs, happy creature was then Roſella Montreſor, with a reaſonable hope before her of being introduced with credit, through the influence of her approved friend, into a world, which to her youthful imagination, then appeared all charming, gay, and deſirable.

What now were her views? To endeavour, by retiring within the limits of the ſphere to which her orphan ſtate had reduced her, to loſe the unfortunate celebrity the eccentric conduct of Miſs Beauclerc had procured her; to try, by the aid of reaſon and prudence, to baniſh the remembrance of thoſe gay hopes ſhe had once cheriſhed; with a perception naturally diſtinguiſhing, and an acute idea of propriety, to live in the centre of affectation, moroſe tyranny, abſurd pretenſions, and ſquabbling ill-humour; and with a mind energetic and reflective,

flective, to endure perpetually the prattle of folly, and the ſcorn of the contemptible.

To this had the romantic fervor of Miſs Beauclerc reduced her, by an unſucceſsful endeavour to realize ſome of thoſe pictures her vitiated taſte would not allow her natural good ſenſe to analyſe.

Yet however Roſella might ſhrink from ſuch a perſpective, ſhe would not ſuffer her diſappointment to ebulliate in reflections injurious to her unhappy friend: her's was a diſappointment unmixed with gall, except indeed when the firſt emotion of keen mortification forced from her lips a ſelf-expreſſed complaint.

She could not reſt in the night for the impatience with which ſhe longed to behold the dawn of that day that was to carry her towards the only perſon, from whoſe friendly and ſenſible advice ſhe hoped aſſiſtance and comfort; and it appeared at length, without giving her any omen of the freſh diſtreſs it was to bring with it.

Oberne called at eight o'clock, and could not withſtand the permiſſion of Miſs Beauclerc to partake her breakfaſt; but he had a head-ach, and was otherwiſe unfit for converſation; and Roſella, who felt concerned at his uncommon depreſſion, tried in vain to relieve it by attentions ſuch as ſhe had never before diſplayed to him.

The chaiſe Maclean had ordered, appeared at the door at nine, and at the ſame moment Mr. Leſley ſent, by Nancy, an entreaty to ſee Miſs Montreſor for five minutes: but ſhe was little diſpoſed to comply with this requeſt, and before Miſs Beauclerc could ſignify her aſſent or diſapprobation, ſhe returned an anſwer, importing

porting that she was much engaged, and desired to be excused.

"Perhaps," said Oberne, "he wishes to offer an apology, that may likewise exculpate me from any lurking suspicion of having authorised or countenanced the liberties that have been taken with your name."

"If that is his errand," exclaimed Miss Beauclerc, who panted for a scene of pathetic sublimity, "my dear Rosella, you may as well see him."

"No, madam," replied she, with a face of earnest entreaty, "I do not wish to hear any thing more of a circumstance so distressing to me, and I must beg to withdraw from Mr. Lesley's apologies, or whatever he may intend to say."

Oberne now left the room, and Rosella saw him advance to the gentleman in waiting, who was receiving the message from Nancy; and after a short conversation, Mr. Lesley walked away.

In another half hour every thing was arranged for their departure: Oberne assisted Miss Beauclerc into the chaise, and when Rosella presented her hand as a parting compliment, he pressed it to his lips with emotion.

"I shall see you I hope," said he, "when your journey is ended; for I too, am bound for London, whither my affairs have called me for some time past, but called in vain whilst you remained in Scotland!"

Rosella blushed, and trying to assume a disengaged air, bade him farewell.

"Farewell, dearest Miss Montresor!" returned he; "when I see you in England, do not treat me as a mere travelling acquaintance, with a cool bow and a mein of surprise, if I should

ſhould have the preſumption to claim the little corner I hope to retain in your memory."

This converſation paſſed at a ſmall diſtance from the chaiſe, by the ſide of which Nancy ſtood, with a ſmall eſcrutoire in one hand, and a dreſſing-box in the other, both of which were to travel upon her knees; and her Lady ſat, *en attendant*, very patiently, without an idea of hurrying affairs, as ſhe well knew that it was extremely natural for a lover to make the moſt of a parting moment.

"Miſs Beauclerc waits!" ſaid Roſella, endeavouring to advance.

"Once more then adieu!" returned Oberne; "and recollect, if any diſtreſs, foreſeen or unforeſeen, ſhould aſſail you, that I ſhall not be far behind throughout your journey: I underſtand that you return by the way of Carliſle?"

"I really do not know," interrupted ſhe, "what Miſs Beauclerc has decided upon: but we are detaining her."

He then ſuffered her to walk to the chaiſe, and placed her in it; then with his uſual good-humour, ſhook hands with Nancy, who made a low courteſy for the condeſcenſion, and turning to diſcover if Menie obſerved it, ſaw her blubbering at the door of the cottage: ſo ſhe gave her a nod of protection, and beſtowing another of equally marked ſuperiority upon Maclean, who was thinking more of his greenhouſe than of her, ſhe was at length ſo obliging, after theſe ceremonials were performed, to follow the ladies into the chaiſe, and away they trotted for Dunkeld.

Miſs Beauclerc could not thus leave her charming retreat, where ſhe expected to have encountered ſo different a ſet of adventures, without

without great mortification: and sublime as were usually her ideas, she could not reflect either upon the trouble or expence it had cost her unavailingly, without feeling disconcerted. She no longer experienced so pressing an inclination to communicate every hour's employment to the gentle Selina, who on her side, was almost annihilated at the discomfiture of a plan which she had for a year back most exceedingly valued herself upon having wholly invented and arranged, and which was to have terminated, after a number of sweet interesting scenes and situations, in the marriage of Lord Morteyne and Rosella—a charming discovery, full of sentiment, of the birth of the lovely bride, and a most elegant episode to portray the immutable friendship of Mrs. Ellinger, who intended to possess the enthusiastic affection of all the parties after having done so much to deserve it.

By the direction of Miss Beauclerc, the driver took her to the house of Mr. Craufurd, who was yet to learn her sudden departure for the South.

As the chaise drew up to the door, Rosella and herself had once again the honour of beholding Mrs. Tadpole, the virago housekeeper at Guairdy: she was at that moment taking her leave of Mrs. Craufurd, who wore her very best holiday countenance, and followed her guest, as usual, into the street with smiles and courtesies.

"I assure you, madam," said Mrs. Tadpole, turning back with a sudden motion, whilst her voice, cleaving the air like a cannon-ball, distinctly met the ears of Rosella and her friend, "I assure you, ma'am, as my account, which I have made bold to trouble you with, isn't at all *exdaggered*, it's a thing I never do."

No,

" No, ma'am, no;" returned Mrs. Craufurd, courteſying anew; " very true, ma'am, very true."

The houſekeeper returning theſe civilities with the moſt gracious air ſhe could contrive to throw over her countenance for the occaſion, and not thinking any more aſſurances requiſite, ſtumped off, and Mrs. Craufurd had then leiſure to beſtow a look of enquiry upon her new gueſts—a look that brought her information equally unexpected and unwelcome. She darted ſeveral glances of ſcorn into the chaiſe, and retreating into her houſe very ſuddenly, ſhut the ſtreet door with a vehemence that made them ſtart.

" The woman is ſurely poſſeſſed," exclaimed Miſs Beauclerc, " to treat us in this manner!"

Roſella could very well gueſs what her conduct implied, and extremely doubtful if they ſhould be able to procure admittance to the maſter of the caſtellum, endeavoured to perſuade her friend to retire to an hotel, and ſend for him there to ſettle her Caledonian affairs. But Miſs Beauclerc ſuſpecting part of the truth, from the remnant of converſation ſhe had overheard, was too much irritated to attend to counſels of ſuch moderation, and having directed the driver to let her out, ſhe rung Maiſter Craufurd's bell with a moſt ſovereign peal of authority.

The gude mon's office looked into the ſtreet, and he was drawn to one of the windows by the unuſual violence of the application; but inſtead of flying to the door with innumerable low bows and fawning ſalutations, he called apparently to ſome other perſon in the room with him, who came likewiſe to the window, and

and gazed earneſtly at Miſs Beauclerc, turning afterwards a ſcrutinizing regard upon Roſolla.

The ſtranger was an elderly man, with a cold and forbidding aſpect; he wore a black wig, which covered half his forehead, and was tied in a very long queue behind; his whole appearance indicating little commerce with the world, much formality, and more ſelfiſhneſs.

Miſs Beauclerc, who had hitherto been diſguſted with the ſervility of her Scotch agent, was the more provoked at the remarkable change in his deportment, and the groſs inſolence of his wife; with the mien of a perſon highly indignant, ſhe turned from the impertinent obſervation of the ſable-peruked gentleman, and though ſhe now heard Mr. Craufurd buſtling up the paſſage to open the door, ſhe renewed the thundering ſummons to be let in.

"Hoo d'ye do, madam?" ſaid the Scotchman, in a very conciliating tone; "this pleaſure is ſae unexpected that I cad na believe my ees when I ſaw ye at the door."

"I likewiſe," replied Miſs Beauclerc, "have been doubting my eyes; and I ſhould imagine Mrs. Craufurd has no reaſon to value herſelf upon the excellence of her ſight, or ſurely after ſurveying me very attentively, ſhe would not have turned her back ſo rudely upon me!"

"Ah, ſhe has a cauld in her heed," replied Mr. Craufurd, "and there wull gather a miſt before her ees fra teme to teme, and then ſhe canna diſteenguiſh friends fra faes!"

The lady was rather mollified by this explanation, and having deſired Roſolla to wait her return without quitting the chaiſe, ſhe followed her conductor, who bowed vara low, into his wife's

wife's drawing-room, where he left her for a few moments to give the good woman a lecture, and confer with the ſtranger, whom on his return he introduced to Miſs Beauclerc as his friend, but without mentioning any name.

In a quarter of an hour Mr. Craufurd appeared at the chaiſe-door, and brought a meſſage from Miſs Beauclerc, to the great relief of Roſella, directing her to proceed with Nancy and the baggage to the inn they had viſited on their firſt entrance into Dunkeld, and that ſhe would follow as ſoon as poſſible.

Roſella obeyed this intimation, ſo much delighted with eſcaping any further civil or uncivil ill-humour from Mrs. Craufurd, that ſhe did not reflect much upon the omiſſion of not inviting her into the houſe: having waited very patiently till three o'clock, without hearing any tidings of her friend, as both Nancy and herſelf had riſen early, they began to think their dinner would not be unwelcome; and Roſella ventured to ſend to Mr. Craufurd's, to learn if Miſs Beauclerc was coming. A reply was returned, that the lady was endeavouring to diſpoſe of her cottage, and would be engaged in the diſcuſſion of the buſineſs till the evening.

Roſella therefore ordered her ſolitary meal, but had loſt much of her inclination to do honour to it, from the proſpect of having her journey thus perpetually delayed: ſhe was vexed too to find herſelf at a houſe of public entertainment, accompanied only by the ſimple Nancy; and to fly from unpleaſant reflections, opened one of the packages for a book, and read till ſeven. From this hour, every ſtep in the paſſage leading to the apartment where ſhe ſat, every ſound on the ſtairs, ſeemed to announce the return of her inconſiderate friend; but

but time after time her imagination deceived her, and at ten o'clock her uneaſineſs increaſed ſo much that ſhe deſired Nancy to accompany her, and determined to walk to the houſe of Mr. Craufurd, to learn the reaſon of an abſence protracted ſo conſiderably beyond her expectation. But as ſhe was preparing for the purpoſe, ſhe ſaw the Scotchman enter the room, attended by the ſingular looking perſonage ſhe had obſerved at his office window. A tremor ſeized her—

"Where is Miſs Beauclerc?" exclaimed ſhe.

"The gude leddy is parfectly ſafe," replied Mr. Craufurd, who prevented his companion from anſwering the enquiry; "and ſhe deſires that her luggage may be ſent to mie hooſe, that ſhe may examine it for ſome papers relating to the cottage, which is noo beckume the praperty of this gentleman."

A ſecret dread ſtole over the heart of Roſella at this ſtrange requeſt, her cheeks turned pale, and ſhe ſupported herſelf only with the aſſiſtance of Nancy, who thought the black-perriwigged man muſt either be a bailiff or a thief, and began to tremble for her own ſuperb wardrobe, which ſhe had been ſo long toiling to gather together.

After a pauſe, in which Roſella had found it impoſſible to break ſilence ſhe at length ſaid with a trembling voice—

"I expected the return of Miſs Beauclerc long before this hour; will you inform me what detains her?"

"Some vary parteeklar buſineſs," replied Mr. Craufurd.

She pauſed again; at length—

"Miſs Beauclerc," reſumed ſhe, "has ſo often entreated me to take peculiar care, in her abſence, of two or three packages belonging to her,

her, that I think ſhe cannot intend I ſhould ſend all her baggage;—but if I ſhould be miſtaken, ſhe will perhaps write me a note; and the diſtance is ſo ſmall between this place and Mr. Craufurd's houſe, that the delay cannot be of much conſequence.

"Look you, madam," ſaid the ſtranger, throwing out his hand to enforce his elocution, "I ſhall cut this matter ſhort; you have ſeen enough of my poor couſin, God help her, to know that ſhe is as mad as a March hare, ſo you cannot wonder that I, who am her heir in reaſon, and her heir at law, ſhould begin to look about me, and ſee after my property, before the reſt of it is ſcattered round the kingdom at the rate it has been. I am not ſurpriſed that you ſhould be unwilling to give up your hold, and a fine milch-cow ſhe has been to you by all accounts. But this you muſt take with you, Miſs—all the fine things you have got of her, after her inſanity is notoriouſly proved, the law will obligate you to refund; and as to her property here, you had better give it up without more ado."

The latter part of this harangue was not heard by Roſella, who had loſt all ſenſation in the arms of Nancy, thrown round her as much in terror for herſelf as any other motive.

"Oh Lord, what hae ye done with my poor miſtreſs?" cried the girl, in an agony; "and here too, as I hope for marcy in the day of judgment, you have killed poor Miſs Montreſor!"

This exclamation produced no effect either upon the man of law, or the heir at law, who began culling from the pile of baggage that was placed in a corner of the room, every trunk, band-box, dreſſing-box, and eſcrutoire, portable

ble and unwieldy, that bore the name or initials of Miſs Beauclerc: and that they might not by miſtake leave any thing behind them to which the couſin could in any way pretend a claim, they carried off two packages without inſcription, one of which appertained excluſively to Roſella: then, perfectly ſatisfied with their uninterrupted ſucceſs, they diſappeared, leaving Nancy in a conſternation ſo great, that ſhe ſhould not venture to ſcream out for aſſiſtance till ſhe thought them far away, leſt they ſhould return and murder her.

CHAP. XI.

A Scot cozened—a Journey renewed.

THE people f the houſe, alarmed by her cries, ran into the room, and when they heard her tale, believed that her miſtreſs had been robbed; without recollecting that one of the ſuppoſed collectors was Mr. Craufurd, whom they well knew, and whom they had ſeen both at his entrance and his departure. However, the moſt preſſing inveſtigation at this moment appeared to be, that of learning if the poor terrified young lady was in a ſtate to profit by their aſſiſtance; and for a long time the point was a very doubtful one. Yet at length Roſella revived—revived to lament, with bitter agony, the heavy cloud now obſcuring the deſtiny of her firſt, her laſt, and only friend; for thus, in the deep affliction and anguiſh of the inſtant, ſhe repeatedly apoſtrophized Miſs Beauclerc.

The

The crowd in her apartment attracting her attention, after the more immediate ebullition of grief was paſt, ſhe entreated to be left with Nancy, and her requeſt was complied with.

Roſella would then have flown to the houſe of the unfeeling Mr. Craufurd, in the hope of beholding her ill-fated friend once more, and taking, perhaps, a laſt farewell of her; but Nancy repreſented ſo forcibly the lateneſs of the hour, and the little probability of their being permitted to ſee her poor dear miſtreſs, that ſhe unwillingly deferred the effort: and Nancy added, that to be ſure her Lady muſt for certain be tied down in her bed, with a ſtrait-waiſtcoat on, ſuch as old John Mills uſed to wear, or the devil himſelf could not have made her ſtay with ſuch people.

This afflicting image drew a torrent of tears from the eyes of Roſella, who ſobbed on the boſom of her inconſiderate attendant, now her only ſupport; but ſhe could not be perſuaded to undreſs herſelf, nor even to lie down upon a bed; and the watchful reflections of the long and comfortleſs night often threw her into a freſh agony, at the moment Nancy fancied ſhe was ſinking to repoſe.

The ſun had ſcarcely riſen, when ſhe reſolved to aſk admittance into the houſe where ſhe imagined Miſs Beauclerc was ſtill forcibly detained. What her ſenſations muſt have been—what they muſt yet be, at a treament ſo unlooked-for, and offenſive to a ſpirit for ſome time paſt unuſed to control of any kind, ſhe ſhuddered to think of! and the loſs of her own fame, and her preſent forlorn ſituation, weighed light in the balance, againſt ſo deadly a blight as the double loſs of reaſon and of liberty.

The people around Roſella, ſoftened by her diſtreſs, of which they now comprehended the real cauſe, treated her with civility and attention, in ſpite of the whiſperings of ſuſpicion, that their intereſt would not be much forwarded by the complaiſance to which they were irreſiſtibly impelled; and they ſuffered her to quit the houſe unmoleſted, though they were not certain ſhe would leave in it a ſufficient ſecurity for the payment of their demand; as Nancy, in her terror and agitation, had aſſerted that the poor dear creature was ſtripped of every thing ſhe had in the world.

Roſella ſoon found herſelf at Mr. Craufurd's door, and remembering the cruel artifice which had induced her the day before to leave it without being accompanied by Miſs Beauclerc, ſhe felt her indignation almoſt equal to her affliction. She had not, in the perturbation of her mind, reflected upon the unuſual earlineſs of the hour, and waited a conſiderable time before Nancy could perſuade her that no perſon in the houſe was ſtirring.

When ſhe became at length convinced of this, ſhe preferred beguiling her impatience, by enjoying, as far as her anxious ſolicitude would permit her, the freſhneſs of the morning breeze, rather than return to the inn; and when her watch informed her that it was nearly eight, ſhe could no longer reſtrain it, but haſtily flew back to Mr. Craufurd's, and again with trembling eagerneſs applied for admiſſion.

A ſervant opened the door, and to her requeſt to ſee his maſter or his Lady, replied that he believed his maiſter was not at home, and his maiſtreſs was engaged; but he wad luk.

" Tell

"Tell them," said Rosella, following him a few steps into the passage, "that I entreat they will see me; for I have very important——"

The fellow without attending to her entered a sitting-room, and spoke in a low tone; she soon discovered to whom, for the voice of the lady of the mansion was very distinctly heard to reply—

"She can't have any thing to say to me—I know nothing of her; and I desire you will not trouble your master, for he can do her no service, so it's in vain for her to think of it: if she wants charity, let her go to her gentlemen for charity.—But do you keep an eye upon her, Andrew, for she's pretty revengeful.—It's not a week ago, Sir," addressing herself apparently to another person in the room, "that the girl gave an appointment to three young fellows of fashion, and then set them together by the ears, and while they were scuffling, she watched her opportunity, and pushed one of them, whom she did not like, down a craig, where he was almost killed."

"What you have uttered, madam," said Rosella, advancing into the room, "is a cruel and malicious misrepresentation; by whom it has been thus related to you I can, I believe, guess. But I merely came here to enquire for my poor friend, and to conjure Mr. Crausurd to permit me to see her once more."

"Andrew," exclaimed the indignant gentlewoman, "why did you suffer her——"

"Your servant is not to blame," interrupted Rosella; "will you, madam, attend to my entreaty."

She made some contemptuous reply, which Rosella heard not; for the gentleman whom

ſhe had not yet regarded, haſtily advanced, and taking her hand, in a manner that diſplayed reſpect and ſolicitude—

" I have," ſaid he, " already preferred the ſame requeſt, and this woman aſſerts that Miſs Beauclerc has been removed."

" Mr. Oberne!" exclaimed Roſella, on recognizing the perſon ſhe had hitherto overlooked: " Oh for Heaven's ſake! prevail with her to let me ſee my unhappy friend, though but for a moment!"

" No, Miſs," retorted Mrs. Craufurd, " the *woman*, as he is pleaſed to call me, will not ſtir a peg for your vagaries; and ſince you have forced yourſelf in, where you have no buſineſs, I ſhall tell you that you have no occaſion to wait here upon your pretences.—And, Miſs, the next time I go out, remember I ſhall take care you don't take my place at the head of my table, and eat your fill at my coſt!—— *Woman* truly!"

" Devil then," cried Oberne, in a rage! ſince that ſuits you better!"

Roſella ſhrunk from ſuch a contention, and giving up the hope of again beholding Miſs Beauclerc, was retiring in great dejection, when the ſervant came in, and informed his Lady that her preſence was required immediately in the office.

She flounced away, muttering ſomething wholly unintelligible; and Oberne, detaining Roſella, aſked the man in which apartment the lady was, who came the day before in a poſt chaiſe with Miſs Montreſor?

" The leddy was ta'en awa laſt neight by her kinſmon and twa keepers," was the reply.

" Keepers!

" Keepers! repeated Roſella, turning pale, " what does he mean?"

" Attendants," replied Oberne haſtily, to prevent any other explanation.

Mrs. Craufurd now returned to them with a countenance wholly changed; and condeſcending to beg pardon for the little heat ſhe had been in, proceeded, unaſked, to confirm the aſſertion of Andrew, by aſſuring Roſella that her poor, dear, inſane friend had been hurried away from her houſe by her violent couſin, who would not hear a word from her or Mr. Craufurd, though they both begged ſhe might be indulged in her repeated entreaty to be ſuffered to ſend her purſe to Miſs Montreſor, whom ſhe called her beloved and unfortunate girl.

A loud hem from an adjoining room, which was only ſeparated by a ſlight partition, ſtopped the loquacity of the lady; and ſhe was endeavouring to retract the information ſhe had too unguardedly let fall, when Oberne, irritated by her duplicity and previous inſolence, interrupted her.

" Well, madam," ſaid he, " I will now only repeat to you, that if I find Miſs Montreſor has been robbed of any part of her wardrobe, or that ſhe miſſes any one of her trinkets, or any of her property, Mr. Craufurd ſhall be reſponſible for her loſs."

" Robbed!" reiterated Mrs. Craufurd, " good Lord! I hope not—I hope the poor dear young lady has not been robbed—that would be ſad indeed after ſuch a misfortune! But, Sir—good Sir, how can you make poor dear Mr. Craufurd reſponſible?"

" He

" He perfectly underſtands by what means he is ſo," replied Oberne, " ſince his accomplice has diſappeared."

" His accomplice! my good gentleman, Mr. Briſtock is no accomplice of his."

" Then he is an accomplice of Mr. Briſtock, and that is the ſame thing.——My dear Miſs Montreſor, you appear indiſpoſed; let me conduct you from this place."

Roſella accompanied him in ſilence, and he attended her to the inn, where Nancy, who had been rejoiced to ſee him, related all their grievances; and repeated what ſhe had told to every body who would liſten to her, that the depredators had carried off Miſs Montreſor's trunk, with her ear-rings, and necklace, and bracelets, and every thing."

" I have already heard of this villainy." replied Oberne, with indignation; " and that ſcoundrel Craufurd ſhall repent his atrocity!"

Roſella, who had not been ſenſible of the tranſaction, looked over the remnant of their baggage, and found that Nancy's intelligence was true. The trunk was a ſmall one, and contained all her ornaments, the gifts of her unhappy friend, ſome of which were rather valuable. She recollected too, that ſhe had put a five pound note into the box, which, except three or four guineas, was all the money ſhe poſſeſſed; and for the firſt time her affliction would permit her to think ſolely of herſelf: ſhe found that it would be utterly impoſſible to reach London without an immediate application to her guardian, nor did ſhe imagine it would prevent her from the too probable mortification of being pennyleſs in a place where ſhe was a ſtranger.

Oberne

Oberne saw her distress, and attempted to relieve it by assuring her he would oblige Mr. Craufurd to refund the value of the things taken from her, unless Mr. Bristock restored them.

But this was little consolation to Rosella, who was anxious to begin her long journey, and dreaded, with tenacious delicacy, the offer of a pecuniary loan on his part, should he discover the slenderness of her finances. Nancy too, whatever consolation she might derive from her attentions and attachment at such a moment, she felt to be an additional source of inquietude; for she was sensible she ought to be sent back to her aunt, lest Mr. Ellinger should refuse to consider her but as the servant of Miss Beauclerc, and refuse to pay the wages due to her, or be responsible for the expences of her journey. But she could not follow the dictates of her judgment and her probity, even by stripping herself of her last guinea; and overcome by the most cruel and harassing reflections, she threw herself on a chair, and wept bitterly.

Oberne was much affected, and reiterated his offers of service.

"Command me, dearest Rosella," said he; "will you commission me to hasten to England with the information of your disaster?—shall I send my servant with a letter to any of your friends?—will you permit me to write in your name, as you are too much indisposed to undertake it?—Tell me what I shall do."

"Nothing, nothing," replied she, her heart dying within her; "do not trouble yourself any further about me.—Pray leave me!"

"I will," said Oberne, "after I have seen you eat some breakfast. You will be seriously ill,

ill, ſitting up, as I underſtand you did all night, and now taking no nouriſhment."

"Lord! who told you that?" exclaimed Nancy, ſuddenly imagining he dealt a little in witchcraft.

"I called here," returned he, "a few minutes after you had left the houſe this morning, and having heard a detail of the misfortune of poor Miſs Beauclerc, I was directed to Mr. Craufurd, as a perſon with whom ſhe had tranſacted ſome buſineſs, and who was acceſſary to her removal.

The breakfaſt Oberne had ordered as he entered the houſe, was now introduced, and Roſella drank ſome tea, that ſhe might not appear obſtinate and ungrateful for his ſolicitude; and finding herſelf rather revived from the effort, ſhe ſat down to inform Mr. Ellinger of her uncomfortable and improper ſituation. But in deſcribing its extreme deſolation, ſhe ſuddenly recollected the aunt of Miſs Beauclerc, who reſided at Dumfries, and that the letters of her poor friend had more than once mentioned her as the ſolace of the whole family at Avelines.

This fortunate remembrance cheered her with a hope of immediate relief from her difficulties; and, as Oberne had not yet left the room, ſhe made him acquainted with the conſoling idea ſhe had juſt ſtarted. He was pleaſed to ſee her look leſs deſpondingly, and entreating that ſhe would not fail to take ſome reſt in the courſe of the morning, he left her to purſue his threatened plan reſpecting Mr. Craufurd.

Roſella then began a ſecond letter to her guardian, in which ſhe repeated the picture of her ſituation; but told him ſhe ſhould proceed

to

to Dumfries with Miſs Beauclerc's woman, who had been left with her, where ſhe hoped to obtain the protection of her poor friend's aunt, Mrs. Delaval, and where ſhe truſted he would ſend her his inſtructions and a proper remittance. She would alſo have given an account of herſelf to Mr. Mordaunt; but his ſilence to her application, after the ill ſucceſs of Mr. Ellinger's recall, which ſhe conſtrued into anger or contempt, withheld her.

She had neglected to order any dinner, either for herſelf or Nancy; but Oberne had been more conſiderate, and as ſhe was deliberating whether ſhe ought not immediately to begin her journey to Dumfries, that her expences might not exceed her purſe, Nancy entered to preſent the compliments of Mr. Oberne, and to know if ſhe was at leiſure to receive him.

Roſella thought ſhe was not acting prudently in aſſenting to this requeſt; but his anxiety for her welfare, his earneſtneſs to relieve her from embarraſſment, and the perpetual proofs of reſpect and eſteem he was ſo eager to give, chaſed every idea of reſerve and coldneſs, and ſhe conſented to ſee him.

He appeared with a countenance of alacrity, and told her he had obtained from Mr. Craufurd a promiſe to reſtore, or cauſe to be reſtored, the valuables, of which ſhe had been ſo brutally deprived; and, as a pledge of the fulfilment of this engagement, he entreated Miſs Montreſor would draw upon him for any ſum ſhe might have immediate occaſion for.

Roſella thanked Oberne for his friendly interference; but ſhe could not prevail upon herſelf to profit by the forced acknowledgment of the prudent Scot, which indeed ſhe much

doubted the truth of, and thought it a delicate expedient of Oberne to ſupply her with the money requiſite for travelling. And thus far ſhe was right, that could he not have ſucceeded with Mr. Craufurd, he had intended to have made uſe of the ſame pretext to have advanced her a ſum ſufficient to have taken her to London

But this gude gentleman, with all his coolneſs and artifice, had ſuffered himſelf to be hurried into an imprudence by the ſtill more wily Mr. Briſtock, who had preſented him a retaining fee of fifty pounds, to enſure his aſſiſtance in ſecuring the perſon of his inſane relation; and the terrified agent, trembling leſt he ſhould be too ſuddenly called upon for the vouchers of the expenditure of thoſe ſums he had received for the purchaſe of the land, and the building and fitting up of the cottage, which indeed were of a ſcandalous magnitude, was willing to ſecure the friendſhip of the heir, who had brought with him atteſtations of his identity, and a copy of his deceaſed uncle's will. So he walked very paſſively in the path chalked out for him, becauſe he had heard from Guairdy of the poſitive derangement of his client; and though his cautious ſoul ſhrunk from the violence he was a party in, he ſtill ſuppoſed himſelf ſafe on every ſide; as he thought Roſella a deſtitute orphan, for ſuch Mr. Briſtock had repreſented her, without a ſingle friend or protector, ſave the one now torn from her.

He had accompanied Miſs Beauclerc and her unfeeling couſin the firſt ſtage on their way to the ſouth; becauſe the gentleman was deſirous of the credit of Mr. Craufurd's preſence, that no effort of the priſoner to obtain aſſiſtance againſt

againſt the outrage ſhe ſuſtained. ſhould retard his journey, or hazard the failure of his ſcheme. But, contrary to the expectation of both, when ſhe found reſiſtance vain, ſhe wept bitterly, but at length ſubmitted to her deſtiny; and her inexorable heir then diſmiſſed Maiſter Craufurd, telling him at parting, to arrange all his papers relative to the curſed buſineſs of the Scotch purchaſe, and tranſmit them, per next poſt, to his addreſs; and that he ſuppoſed the fifty pounds he had left in his hands, would be ſufficient to anſwer every demand for houſekeeping, &c. the few days Miſs Beauclerc had remained at her new reſidence.—And thus, according to the old adage, the Devonſhire hero, "maun ha got oop betimes, and ha ta'en auld ſcratch for his coonſellor."

When Oberne, the Hon. Mr. Oberne, was announced to him, demanding intelligence of Miſs Beauclerc, and appearing, as a previous note had expreſſed, in behalf of her young friend, Mr. Craufurd, juſt returned from his excurſion in a ſtate of infinite diſcomfiture, put off the taſk of receiving him to his weef; and ſhe, good woman, laboring very hard to prove the poor ladies to be the very worſt of their ſpecies, was finiſhing the portrait of Roſella, when Andrew peeped into the room, and ſaid ſhe was in the paſſage.

Such a *mal àpropos* interruption very naturally excited her choler; and her huſband, rouſed from a deep reverie by the exertion of her lungs, ſent for her out to drop the haſty hint that ſo expeditiouſly altered her tone.

It was not very ſurpriſing that Roſella ignorant of all this, ſhould ſuſpect Oberne of endeavouring to force a friendly impoſition upon her;

her; and he protested in vain against the injustice of her supposition, till he offered to bring Mr. Craufurd to her, to ascertain the truth of what he affirmed.—Rosella still, however declined the expedient, telling him she had little doubt of obtaining shelter and protection of Mrs. Delaval.

"To Dumfries then I will accompany you," replied Oberne; "and, should your expectations deceive you, you will at least have a resource in this man's proposition to repair some part of his villainy."

Rosella would have opposed his attendance when she solicited the countenance of Miss Beauclerc's aunt; for some of the old lady's letters expressed a strong horror of the wiles, the perfidies, and ingratitude of men, against whom she hoped her niece, being a staid young woman, would preserve herself by prayer, faith, and fasting.

But Rosella had a double disinclination to overcome in dismissing Oberne—his and her own: for he had in truth made himself an interest in her heart by a series of good offices and attentions, the source of which could not have been mistaken, even had not his parting information at Luss opened her eyes to his sentiments. He had told her that their acquaintance had begun in a moment of frolic on his side; and he had told her too, that it had been prolonged from a far different motive. The conduct of Miss Beauclerc in encouraging his assiduities, had flattered his vanity---that of Rosella in repressing them, had excited his esteem; and of those reports so injurious to her, he better than any one knew the cruel fallacy, and they called at once for his indignation and tenderest compassion. But these very reports,

false

false as they were, operated as a motive to check any further avowal of his particular admiration, and his declining fortune was a still more powerful one.

The vague fluctuation of his views, however, could not influence his conduct; and the affection he resolved to overcome, became each day more progressive. When he parted from Rosella at Luss, he might have succeeded in forgetting that he had experienced a more than common interest for her, had not a letter from Mr. Lesley, which reached him at Edinburgh, whither he had returned, aroused his resentment and solicitude in her behalf. It plainly expressed all that the writer had insinuated to Rosella herself, and demanded to know if their separation were lasting or temporary.

Oberne flew to answer the enquiry in person, and vindicate the character of the young woman, whose prudent reserve and modesty of deportment had so ill-merited the conclusions drawn from the indiscretions of her older friend.

At Guairdy, he learned, with the calamity that was supposed to have overtaken Miss Beauclerc, the extravagance of that conduct which, in some measure, justified the surmises of his friend Lesley; and when the offender professed his concern at having added to the distress of mind Rosella endured, the interview had become an amicable one, and he had voluntarily proposed to ride over to the cottage, to exculpate Oberne from having in the least authorized his impertinence—a step he privately assured Mr. Estcourt, solely dictated by the curiosity he experienced to learn upon what terms the lady and her champion were.

Rosella

Roſella was ſo anxious to proceed to Dumfries, that ſhe could ſcarcely be perſuaded to remain where ſhe was, until the dinner Oberne had ordered made its appearance; and then ſhe found it ſo much more ſumptuous than ſhe, from inclination and neceſſity, would have thought of, that her appetite was entirely loſt in the ſecret calculation ſhe made of the too probable amount of the expence.

When the tedious meal was ended, from which of courſe Oberne was not to be excluded, ſhe withdrew to her chamber, and ſent Nancy to aſk for the bill, which ſhe was apprehenſive he would think it neceſſary to diſcharge. But he had already done ſo; and Roſella, much chagrined, re-entered the eating-room to expoſtulate with him on the ſubject.

"Do you think," ſaid Oberne, gravely, "I would chuſe to live at your expence?"

"Suffer me to retort that queſtion," replied ſhe; "indeed you have much hurt me by acting thus."

"I am ſorry for it," returned he; "but I muſt perſiſt in my error, if an error it is, unleſs you will compromiſe the diſpute by accepting the propoſition of Mr. Craufurd."

"I had a ſmall note in the box," ſaid Roſella, "and if he will ſend another of equal value, until I hear from my guardian, I will venture to take it, without fearing to incur my own cenſure, or that of others."

"No," cried Oberne, "I will not allow this. You ſhall not receive leſs than will enable you to await a reply to your letter, or carry you to London; you may then adopt which plan you find the moſt eligible."

She would further have objected, but he would not hear her, and went immediately to Mr.

Mr. Craufurd to ſettle the affair to his own ſatisfaction. That gude gentleman, extremely provoked at the turn things had taken, and fearful of being reduced to an unpleaſant dilemma, thought proper to expreſs a great abhorrence of the inhumanity of Mr. Briſtock.

" Of his villany, ſay rather," ſaid Oberne indignantly; " the inſanity of his couſin has involved a moſt amiable young lady in diſtreſs and embarraſſment, to ſay nothing further; and this atrocious monſter adds to both, by robbing her, with unheard-of brutality, of all her caſh and valuables!"

" Caſh!" repeated Maiſter Craufurd, looking aghaſt, " did the box which the young leddy miſſes, contain caſh? But perhaps ſhe had it in charge for Miſs Booclar?"

" No," exclaimed Oberne, in a loud key, " ſhe had it in charge from her guardian for her own uſe."

" Aah!" ejaculated the accomplice, dropping his jaw in ſurpriſe and conſternation, " her guardian! has the young leddy a guardian?—My gude Sir, Maiſter Braſtick maun repant what he has done! The mon has left in my honds a fifty poond nawte, withoot expreſſing hoo it is to be applied; and I do nae ken hoo it can be applied better than in relieving the young leddy fra her deeficulties."

" Certainly it cannot," replied Oberne, " and you had better place it in her *honds*, and waſh your own of ſo dark a buſineſs."

Mr. Craufurd ſaid he ſhould be reeght glad to do ſo, and followed his impetuous conductor to the inn, where Roſella awaited him, who heard, with extreme ſurpriſe, that he meant to offer her fifty pounds for her immediate uſe. But ſhe would not by any means conſent to receive

ceive it, either as a loan or an indemnification; and after much argument and perſuaſion, could only be induced to accept half the ſum, which ſhe acknowledged in writing to have received of Mr. Craufurd.

After this affair was ſettled, Roſella, eager to quit a place rendered hateful to her, and ſtill more earneſt to ſhelter herſelf under the protection of Mrs. Delaval, reimburſed Oberne for her ſhare of the expences at the inn, and was aſſiſted by him into the chaiſe ſhe had ordered. She bade him farewell, and he returned it; but not with an air as if he meant the adieu ſhould be a long one, and ſhe felt anxious to know if he followed her.

"Perhaps," thought ſhe, "he now thinks he has done enough to ſerve me; yet he ſaid he would accompany me to Dumfries. It is better however that he ſhould not---Mrs. Delaval would perhaps be rendered ſuſpicious by ſuch a circumſtance, were ſhe to diſcover it, and refuſe to receive me."

Yet, though ſhe internally ſettled that the abſence of Oberne would be quite deſirable, ſhe was not diſpleaſed to catch a glimpſe of his figure when ſhe reſted for the night. She roſe early the next morning, intending to travel the firſt ſtage before breakfaſt; but Nancy was very unwilling to move without her's, and Roſella, who fancied Oberne was intereſted in the circumſtance, altered her intention.

Nor was ſhe miſtaken: he applied for the honor of attending her *déjeuné*; and as he had had the delicacy to forbear even announcing his vicinity to her the evening before, ſhe would not diſappoint his expectation.

With much complacency on either ſide, they parted; and the conduct Oberne had adopted, appeared

appeared to be now tacitly agreed to by Roſella, who ſaw him no more, until the following morning, when he again breakfaſted with her at Bield; and ſhe would not let this opportunity paſs, the only one perhaps ſhe might have, without acknowledging with much gratitude, the ſervices he had rendered her.

"We will not talk in this ſtyle," interrupted he; "beſides, I intend to learn how your expectations are realized by the old damſel at Dumfries, before I finally quit you."

"But I fear," ſaid Roſella, "your appearance alone will fruſtrate my hopes with Mrs. Delaval."

"I ſhall not appear," he replied, "at leaſt in your ſuite; but you muſt allow me to concert with Nancy ſome method of diſcovering your deſtination. If the good old lady ſhould receive you kindly, I will immediately bid you farewell; if ſhe ſhould not, you will then, perhaps, take my advice in what manner you may moſt ſafely purſue your journey; and I will give you the beſt a moderate capacity, and more than moderate good wiſhes, can ſuggeſt."

CHAP

CHAP. XII.

Domeſtic Subordination—and domeſtic Diſcipline.

IT was little more than one o'clock when ſhe entered Dumfries; and having recollected that Mrs. Delaval lived with a family named Macdoual, ſhe ſoon diſcovered their abode, and drove immediately to the houſe. It was a neat little manſion, and every thing about it ſeemed, as Nancy ſaid, in ſuch grand apple-pie order, that it gave Roſella a ſtrong idea of that extreme attention to cleanlineſs and form, which uſually excludes eaſe and reſt.

The arrival of a carriage at the door, occaſioned the ſame kind of motion in this prim box, which a child gives to the contents of its rattle: half-a-dozen girls, "bull-faced and freckled fair," ran from window to window, and their voices, dancing in alt upon a Scotch cadence, were diſtinctly heard by Roſella. A laſſie, whoſe claithing was in the modern ſtyle, that is, ſo ſcanty that "if it had been leſs, 'twould have been none at all," peeped fra the hedge at ſic a bonny ſight, and little thought that Nancy, the gayer leddy of the twa, was like herſelf a ſervant.

At

At length another perſonage appeared, a good-humoured looking, little, fat woman, who ſcudded towards the viſiters in a manner that demonſtrated an unſeen battle between conſtitutional civility and conſtitutional corns; and Roſella returning her ſalutation, ſaid, ſhe underſtood that Mrs. Delaval reſided at the houſe, and begged to know if ſhe might be permitted to ſpeak to her.

"Ah poor dear creature!" returned the lady, who was Mrs. Macdoual herſelf, "ſhe has fell down, and bruiſed her leg ſadly, ſo ſhe can't come out to ſee you; but would you chuſe to walk in and ſee her; for ſhe ſets in her great chair, dear good ſoul, all day long without ſtirring, only to go to bed, and eat her dinner."

Roſella, who could not perfectly underſtand, by this harangue, the rank and ſituation of the ſpeaker, deſcended from the chaiſe; and chuſing to err by too much condeſcenſion rather than by too little, entreated the lady to excuſe the liberty ſhe took in conveying by her a letter to Mrs Delaval.—A letter ſhe had previouſly written, that ſhe might not have to perform the awkward ceremony of announcing herſelf and her buſineſs.

"I hope no bad news!" returned the little dame, endeavouring to look ſolemn, "You come from England, Miſs: aye, ſo do I—— we're countrywomen;—but you look too pretty and good-natured to bring us bad news. Perhaps," ſhe continued, with an air of importance, "the niece is dead, as well as the reſt of 'em."

"No, madam," ſaid Roſella, with a ſaddened mien; "but I muſt refer Mrs. Delaval to the letter."

"Mither,"

" Mither," hallooed a rude voice, " why dinna ye cume in, when Maiſtreſs Deelaval ſcreams oot for ye to gang tul her ?"

" I'm coming, Jannie, I'm coming," cried the mother, running off in a great hurry.

Roſella then remained ſtanding by the ſide of the chaiſe, gazed at only by diſtant ſpectators, who ſeemed afraid of venturing too near ; and ſhe augured little good from ſuch a ſcene.

In the interim, a very tall, bony, rigid-looking man advanced to her, and demanded her buſineſs ; adding, in a tone as ſolemn as if he meant to purſue the whole Church Catechiſm—

" And what's your nem ?"

Roſella informed him, fully expecting that " Wha gave ye that nem ?" would certainly follow ; and the queſtion would have been more appropriate than ſhe had any idea of ; but the Fates decreed that the next interrogation ſhould be—

" Wha d'ye luk for here ?"

" I wait in the hope of ſeeing Mrs. Delaval," replied ſhe ; " I have ſent in a letter for her peruſal."

" Fra whom ?" ſaid the queſtioner.

Roſella was embarraſſed ;—a letter from herſelf, brought in perſon, was ſo like the expedient of a beggar of alms, that ſhe heſitated ; and the tall perſonage, with a ſevere frown, quitted her abruptly, and walked into the houſe, exhibiting, as he turned his back, a pair of tremendous ſhoulder-bones, that marked, by their alternate elevation, every ſtep he took.

" What next ?" thought Roſella, very much tired of ſuch a procedure.

" I do

" I do ſuppoſe," exclaimed Nancy, " them pipple means us to ſtay here till night-fall."

After another five minutes, the little fat gentlewoman again hobbled out.

" Well, my dear," cried ſhe, " ſo you have been in a fine ſea of troubles?—So Mr. Macdoual has been ſpeaking to you;—but never mind him—we never care for his croſs looks, not we—if we can but get ſhut of him half an hour now and then, then we enjoy ourſelves."

" Does Mrs. Delaval chuſe to ſee me?" aſked Roſella.

" Yes, my dear, yes; I came to tell you to come in."

So ſaying, the talkative dame again tacked about, followed by the gueſt thus curiouſly invited. Roſella expected to be reminded to wipe the duſt from her ſhoes, and perform all theſe ceremonies required in a manſion kept like a cabinet;---what then muſt have been her ſurpriſe to find the inſide of the houſe correſpond ſo little with the exterior, as to make her imagine ſhe had miſſed the entrance, and plunged by miſtake into the piggery!

The children of the family thruſt their ragged heads through ſome half-opened doors to ſurvey her more narrowly, whilſt the gown of her conductreſs hooked, by means of a rent already made in it, to a lock which was hanging by one ſcrew, belonging to the room where Mrs Delaval was ſitting and completed a fracture from one end of the ſkirt to the other.

" Here, my dear love," ſaid the airy houſewife, ſcarcely regarding the diſaſter, " here is the young lady!"

And ſhe then introduced Roſella to a woman apparently between fifty aud ſixty, of a middle

middle height, neat, and old-fashioned, with pellucid grey eyes, and cheeks like the shrivelled but rosy skin of a blighted peach; her nose exhibited a blue purple tint, that marked health undermined, and her whole aspect spoke little of the character to which it belonged, except that a trait of resignation and benevolence sometimes insinuated itself amidst the vacuum.

"You are Miss Montresor," said she, after a pause, in which Rosella was painfully agitated.

"Yes, Madam."

Mrs. Delaval attempted to rise to receive her.

"My dear love, pray sit still," cried her little bustling friend, "I have told Miss Mounteresa that you have fallen upon an accident—there, there, sit ye down!"

The good lady obeyed without a comment, and Rosella finding that she was expected immediately to furnish topics for a conversation, having been pulled into a ricketty chair by the mistress of the mansion, began to enlarge upon the information her letter had slightly touched upon.

"My poor niece!" exclaimed Mrs. Delaval, and the tears started into her eyes; those of Rosella fell upon her cheeks.

"Come, come, my dear creature," said the fat personage, whom Rosella had now discovered to be Mrs. Macdoual, "you must not vex yourself; consider your poor health.—There, do not now," turning to the guest, "say any more;—this love will fret herself into a fever if you do."

Rosella waited to hear this admonition approved by Mrs. Delaval; but she sat very

very quietly expecting another topic to be ſtarted; and Roſella then ventured to entreat her protection and countenance until ſhe received inſtructions from her guardian for her return to England.

Mrs. Delaval appeared diſconcerted by this requeſt, and her friend ſeemed equally uneaſy and undecided what reply to make. They looked ſeveral times at each other before Mrs. Devaval could frame an anſwer that would neither encourage the petitioner to hope an acquieſcence with her demand, nor yet exhibit a ſemblance of inhumanity, very far from her heart.

"Why, my dear—I can't ſay," heſitated the good lady, "I can—very readily—for here poor Mrs. Macdoual has a houſe quite full. God knows, there is hardly room for me, only ſhe won't turn me out, now I am in a ſtrange country."

There was ſuch an appearance of ſimplicity in her countenance whilſt ſhe made this explanation, and Roſella had ſo often heard that the whole intereſt of her fortune, which was nearly twenty thouſand pounds, was almoſt entirely ſwallowed up by this family, that ſhe could not feel angry at an imbecility which had no mixture of ſelfiſh hypocriſy in it.

"Will you allow me to ſay, madam," ſaid ſhe, "that as I cannot have the good fortune of receiving ſhelter under the ſame roof with you, it would very much ſerve me, if I might be permitted the ſanction of your name and character, in ſeeking accommodation in any houſe in the neighbourhood, where a vicinity to you and Mrs. Macdoual's family would enſue me attention and reſpect."

The

The consternation of the two ladies was increased by this proposition; and Rosella began to despair of obtaining any civility or favor from Mrs. Delaval, who muttered that she was sorry she could not always do what she wished.

"God knows," continued she, in rather a louder key, "I am as economical as I can be;—you see, my dear, I wear a coloured linen gown and a stuff petticoat, to save washing, and yet, somehow, I can scarcely make both ends meet. And poor Mrs. Macdoual here, she denies herself every thing; so I am obliged to get a hamper of wine now and then—that is an extravagance certainly; but, poor thing, I can't see her drop for want of a little nourishment;—and then the poor children, they must go to school to be a little like others when they go out in the world, though their father thinks it is not necessary, and Gods knows they are wild enough now, as it is!—But it is so cruel to see children pine for a little education, and not get it, somehow.—And then, as poor dear Mrs. Macdoual says, men are so ignorant of what is wanted in the kitchen, and what must be had of household linen and clothes, and extras, that it grieves one to think a friend should be distressed."

"Ah, God help me!" exclaimed the lady of the house," "I don't know where I should have been now, if I had not had a dear good friend; Mr. Macdoual is so harsh; and indeed, my dear Miss, that is partly the reason we cannot have you here.—I hope you won't think me unkind——"

"Pray, madam," interrupted Rosella, "do "not imagine such a request is necessary; but I believe Mrs. Delaval mistakes my meaning.—I have a supply of money for lodging and accommodation;

commodation; I merely entreat to be recommended to a family of credit and reſpectability, and to be allowed to ſay that my character and connections are not unknown to you."

"Ay ſurely, ſurely," cried Mrs. Macdoual, with a tone of alacrity; "yes, my dear young lady, I will do that—we will do that, my dear.—But, poor thing, you have come a long way in grief and trouble—you ſhall have a glaſs of my poor love's wine."

"Excuſe me, madam," ſaid Roſella.

"No I ſhan't excuſe you; it's already at hand."

She then opened a ſmall cloſet, and took from it a bottle and glaſſes, which ſhe filled with wine; and Roſella, at the earneſt perſuaſion of Mrs. Delaval, accepted one of them: but ſhe had ſcarcely raiſed it to her lips, before it was ſnatched from her by the lady of the manſion, and every thing again huddled into the cloſet with a haſte and trepidation that ſpilt the wine and broke ſome glaſſes.

Roſella was not long ſuffered to wonder what this ſtrange pantomime could mean; for the voice of Mr. Macdoual, who was thundering anathemas, and horſewhipping one of his girls, betrayed the ſecret.

The countenance of poor Mrs. Delaval expreſſed pain, mortification, and diſpleaſure; and her yet more ſimple friend ſtopped her ears very carefully, and begged to be informed when Maggy had done ſcreaming, for to hear the poor thing, and not be able to help her, made her quiver like an aſpin-leaf.

Another of the daughters now burſt into the room, to ſay that Janet and Iſabel had taken the horſes from the poſt-chaiſe whilſt the driver was aſleep and had rode them to water; and

one of the beaſts had trod upon his harneſs, and tumbled down, and Janet's noſe was bleeding; and the other was trotting into the deep pool, and Iſabel called out, but nobody came to ſtop him.

"Confound you all!" ſaid the mother, raiſing her voice to a paſſionate pitch; for when the informer had run in, ſhe let fall her hands from her head, to hear the miſchief that ſhe knew was coming—"Confound you all! this is the way you ſerve me. You'll all get your limbs broke, and then who is to ſet them, and nurſe you?—And there," continued ſhe, crying, "your father will murder thoſe two girls, he will!—Oh Lord, that I ſhould live to ſee this day!"

Mrs. Delaval now endeavoured to relieve her inquietude, by ſaying ſhe would go and ſpeak to Mr. Macdoual; and calling the girl to her, ſhe tried, with her aſſiſtance, to limp acroſs the room; but it was with ſo much difficulty that ſhe could advance in any way, that Roſella, unaſked, flew to ſupport her.

"Thank you, my dear," ſaid the ſufferer, who had not been much accuſtomed to ſpontaneous kindneſs, "I will not lean too hard."

"Yes but ye do," ſaid the imp on the other ſide of her, "I ſal drap doon gin ye dunna haud yere hond."

"Go then," replied Mrs. Delaval, with conſiderable reſentment, "go in your father's way, and get your deſerts; and then call out to me to make him *haud* his *hond*, as you did yeſterday."

"Noo I wunna then," ſaid the girl pouting.

"You are always keeping your mother in hot water," reſumed the good lady; "ſuch a ſet of idle, good-for-nothing girls was never ſeen!

ſeen! you worry her poor heart to breaking amongſt you—you do!"

"Ah, God help me!" exclaimed the mother, in a piteous tone.

"Mither ſcailded me yeſtreen," cried the daughter, "for randing my claiths—and noo ſhe's brak her ain goon!"

"Hold your tongue, you pert ſlut," retorted the matron, ſlapping her face.

The young lady immediately ſet up a roar, that ſaved Mrs. Delaval any further effort, by bringing the father into the room, with the dreaded whip flouriſhing in his right hand; but on beholding Roſella ſupporting his lame inmate with kind ſolicitude, that hand for once forgot its office, and he gave her ſeveral ferocious glances, which Mrs. Delaval could not fail to obſerve.

"This young gentlewoman," ſaid ſhe, "comes from my poor niece, who has loſt her ſenſes, and is going to be put into a mad-houſe, I ſuppoſe."

"Aw! and wha's the next a-kin?" demanded the Scotchman.

"Why I am the neareſt relation," returned Mrs. Delaval, "and ſhould like to ſee that juſtice is done her."

"Juſtice!" repeated Macdoual, "aw—but wha ſpeirs aboot the praperty?"

"We will talk of that another time," ſaid Mrs. Delaval; "Miſs Montrefor wants a lodging and board till her guardian ſends ſomebody to take her to England."

"Aw—wal, Meſs, and what d'ye luk for at Dumfries?"

"She looks for nothing but civility," ſaid Mrs. Macdoual, eagerly.

"Haud yere toongue," returned the husband, in a voice of thunder.

An insult offered to her little fat friend generally aroused some indignation in the bosom of Mrs. Delaval, and with a look of commiseration, she begged the silenced gentlewoman to call Mally.

When Mally made her appearance, she gave orders, in a very firm tone, to shew the young lady to Jamie Campbell's, and tell his wife to give her their best room, and wait upon her, and go to market for her whenever the young lady chose.

Rosella, extremely delighted to escape the torture of living in such a *menage* as that of Macdoual, took a respectful leave of Mrs. Delaval, and accompanied Mally, telling the post-boy to follow, who had with some trouble rescued his horses from the Miss Macdouals.

Nancy had been walking about to stretch her legs, and now joined her young Lady; who, thus attended, proceeded to take possession of the best room at Jamie Campbell's. His house, unlike that of his neighbour, promised nothing on the outside, but had "that within which passeth shew;" it was neat, quiet, and well arranged, and Jamie's wife received her unexpected guest, not without some little bustle, but without disorder.

The best room was much approved of by Rosella, for it was clean, light, and airy, and overlooked a fine tract of country terminated by the Solway Frith. She discharged the chaise with real satisfaction; and Nancy having placed in her apartment what Mr. Bristock had condescended to leave of her baggage, she no longer felt a wanderer upon the surface of the globe, but contemplated the little space appro-

priated

priated to her uſe, and much applauded herſelf for thinking of appealing to the protection of Mrs. Delaval.

Nancy was far from being ſo well pleaſed: ſhe reprobated every delay that retarded her approach to London, that moſt charming of emporiums for ſweethearts and fine clothes; and expreſſed her ſorrow that Mr. Oberne, that ſweet-tempered gentleman, had not preſided over the journey, becauſe then it would have been performed ſomething like the matter.

Mrs. Campbell entered into her office almoſt immediately, by preparing dinner for her fair inmate; and as Roſella ſaw no one in the houſe but her, ſhe began to hope that Jamie was abſent from the place: for the ſpecimen of internal government ſhe had witneſſed at Macdoual's, had very much diſguſted her againſt matrimonial ariſtocracy. But ſhe was miſtaken; in the evening the huſband returned from a manufactory he ſuperintended, and Roſella found no inconvenience from it, as he ſat at his door very peaceably, whilſt his wife exerted herſelf to make every thing look comfortable, and rubbed each piece of furniture to a double brightneſs, in honor of their new gueſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Credulity, as in time immemorial, an eaſy conqueſt for artifice and hypocriſy.

THE next morning Roſella walked to Macdoual's, to enquire if Mrs. Delaval were in better health, and to ſay that a letter for herſelf would moſt probably be there in a day or two, which ſhe entreated the family would either take in for her, or ſend to Jamie Campbell's.

Fortunately the maſter of the houſe was from home, but, in his abſence, he had left a ſpy upon the proceedings of his wife and her friend, in the perſon of his eldeſt daughter, who much reſembled him; and this young lady was to be circumvented before Mrs. Macdoual could venture to indulge her *poor love* with a few minutes' converſation with Roſella —a thing the good lady much wiſhed for, but ſcarcely dared to propoſe.

After a feint of ſending the viſiter away, Miſs Janet was eaſily amuſed, whilſt Roſella was ſmuggled into the chamber Mr. Macdoual condeſcended to allow his inmate, in return for the income of her fortune, of which, from her own account, he had almoſt the ſole uſe.

The reception ſhe received was kind, and almoſt tender: poor Mrs. Delaval could now ſpeak

ſpeak without the interruption of her officious friend, who was fully employed in keeping her precious daughter Janet at bay.

She deſired Roſella to tell her every thing ſhe could think of concerning her ſiſter and her niece, and the good lady wept much at the death of the firſt, and the ſtrange fancies of her poor Sophy, who had always, ſhe ſaid, been a good girl, only a little whimſical.

" And now," added ſhe, " I know how to value a ſweet-tempered child; for here—God help us! the bairns are like young dragons!—and their father——In ſhort, my dear, only don't let it go any further, if it was not for my good friend Mrs. Macdoual, who has been like a ſiſter to me, I ſhould have returned to England long ago."

" Ah madam!" ſaid Roſella, " how delighted would Miſs Beauclerc have been to have made you happy!—Indeed ſhe was very amiable——"

" Don't cry, my dear," interrupted Mrs. Delaval, though her own tears dropped equally faſt; " I ſee you are a good natured girl, and I am ſure you was very obliging to me yeſterday.—God knows, I have not been uſed to kindneſs much ſince I left England, except from my poor friend; and ſhe is almoſt killed herſelf by thoſe termagants and their father. I have been thinking all night—only Mr. Macdoual is ſo ſtern and paſſionate, that he will half kill his wife, poor thing, if I go—but I have been thinking, my dear, that I ſhould like to die in England;—and I ſhould like too, to ſee if any thing could be done to bring poor Sophy to her ſenſes again. I perceive you are grateful for her kindneſs to you—I love to ſee young people grateful—and indeed ſhe had a great affection for

for you; for she never wrote me a letter without saying what a sweet, pretty, good-tempered child you was; and I find that it is all true enough.—Mr. Macdoual is so violent!—but I should like," repeated she, in an emphatic accent, "to see England and poor Sophy once again!"

From the further conversation of Mrs. Delaval, Rosella discovered that she was actually only detained in the family, by a fear of the consequences her quitting it would produce upon the stormy passions of the tyrant husband, whose youth had been spent in practising the same servility he now imposed on others.—When first Mrs. Delaval took notice of his wife, whom she had a few years before slightly known as a humble companion to a lady she had visited, every effort to gain her countenance and favor, which art and interest could dictate, he employed himself, and infused into the docile and less designing mind of Mrs. Macdoual.

The heart of Miss Delaval, wounded by recent disappointment, turned to the consolatory proofs of attachment and gratitude these people so eagerly pressed upon her; and at length she withdrew from her more gay and indifferent associates, to enjoy the snug fire-side of good Mrs. Macdoual, who was always so proud and so pleased to see her there. This distinguished visiter was, however, sometimes allured from them by a fondness for the delights of the card-table; and Macdoual, when he returned home from the duties of a small place he had in a public office, hearing her sometimes recounting with animation the history of the rubbers she had won, and the pools Fortune had snatched from her in defiance of skill, purchased a green-

cloth

cloth to cover his Pembroke table upon occaſion, and wrangled with a waiter of a tavern for half-a-dozen ſecond or third hand packs of cards: and then gave his wife her leſſon, who had ſpent many a long evening with her firſt patroneſs, an old woman, in winning a few ſhillings at picquet for pocket-money.

The plan had all the ſucceſs Macdoual could deſire: picquet became the order of the day with Miſs Delaval (for ſhe was not yet of an age to aſſume a matronly title), and ſhe was conſtantly ſeen walking towards the lodgings of her favorite, exactly at five o'clock every afternoon, to drink the tea ſhe uſually purchaſed herſelf, and to have her game at picquet with her good friend.

When the crafty Macdoual thought the empire he had gained by means of his wife, thoroughly eſtabliſhed, he ſuddenly avowed a deſign of returning to his ain coontra, and enjoying the fortune he had realized—in his own imagination; for in fact his only fortune, at that moment, was the harveſt he hoped to reap from his deſigns. If Miſs Delaval heſitated to accompany her poor dear friend Mrs. Macdoual, he intended to make himſelf and her an additional merit in the eyes of his dupe, by ſacrificing a plan they both ſeemed to be fond of, to her inclination to retain them near her. But the good lady did not put them to ſo much trouble; for ſhe left her ſiſter and her little niece, for whom ſhe had a great affection, and attended the favored family to Dumfries.

But lo! Maiſter Macdoual had ſcarcely paſſed the Solway Frith, when ſubmiſſion and ſuavity gave way to an affectation of equality, and a paſſion for dictating; and the poor ſlave, his wife, was compelled to purchaſe half an hour

of good-humour by repeated loans from her friend, who, weak as her underſtanding was, ſoon comprehended that if the tyrant threatened to murder the noiſy bairns, or refuſed money for the wife's clothes or the children's food, ſhe might ſet every thing right again by advancing the ſum required; nor did ſhe ever ſuffer herſelf to deliberate when poor dear Mrs. Macdoual lamented, wrung her hands, and aſſerted that ſhe was the moſt unhappy woman in the world, which ſhe conſtantly did, in the ſame manner that a child will practiſe upon the weak affection by which it can obtain all it wants.

But a mortification awaited Mrs. Delaval ſhe had little foreſeen. The maſter of the houſe in his ain coontra, was a very rigid diſciple of his ain coontra kirk, and would not ſuffer cards, thoſe deviliſh vanities, to appear in his premiſes. Mrs, Deleval however ſubmitted, bitter as was the pill; for ſhe conſidered that ſhe was in a ſtrange land, nor would ſhe have ventured to travel ſo long a journey, even to reach London again, without the protection of more than one attendant, for the world.

But ſhe had no attendant now, whoſe ſervices ſhe could have commanded for twenty miles; for Macdoual had quarrelled with her footman, and ſhe had diſcharged him at Carliſle. She had likewiſe parted with her own maid, becauſe poor Mrs. Macdoual cried, and told her that her huſband could not abide any but Scotch ſervants in his houſe.

Roſella, in the courſe of a converſation which laſted more than two hours, learned every part of this hiſtory that Mrs. Delaval could inform her of, and felt her indignation, as well as her compaſſion, arouſed by the half-uttered complaints of the good old lady, who repeated,

repeated, when her tale was ended, that if Mr. Macdoual would but hear reaſon, ſhe would accompany Miſs Montreſor to London.

" You ſeem ſo obliging and good-natured," added ſhe, " that I dare ſay you would be ſo kind as to take care of me; and then poor Sophy's maid might wait upon me, and I would reward her when I received my half year's intereſt. But unfortunately I could not undertake the journey at preſent; for Mr. Macdoual wanted laſt week to make a purchaſe a little way out of the town, and I could not refuſe to lend him my running caſh, and indeed a little ſum beſides that I had contrived to ſave, notwithſtanding all the drawbacks upon my income;—becauſe the affair was ſo advantageous to him, and he talked too of ſettling the eſtate upon poor dear Mrs. Macdoual, if he could but get the money to buy it."

" How much do you think, madam," ſaid Roſella eagerly, " would take you, Nancy, and myſelf to London?"

" Why, my dear child," returned the good lady, " I cannot abſolutely ſay, travelling is ſo expenſive.—I remember when I came here, it coſt me—I almoſt forget—let me ſee, we travelled in poſt-chaiſes as far as Northampton, and then William paid every thing, and Mr. Macdoual ſays he cheated me of near ten pounds;—how it was I can't tell, for he gave in his accounts to Mr. Macdoual; and after that I was perſuaded to get into a Diligence; but then what with one extra expence, and what with another, it coſt me more money than I had any idea of."

" I ſhould hope, madam," ſaid Roſella, " that if you would condeſcend to return in a ſtage, twenty-five pounds would take us all there,

there, and that ſum I can command. If you will honor me ſo far as to make uſe of it in this way, you will really confer an obligation upon me;—indeed the money is not mine—it is more properly Miſs Beauclerc's."

"Ah, my dear," replied Mrs. Delaval, "I am afraid by my journey hither, that double what you mention would ſtill leave us on the road. But Jamie Campbell can very likely tell you that; and you need not mention my name, you know, when you aſk him. However we will hope the beſt; for indeed I long to ſee old England once more. And, my dear child, I have near five pounds by me, which I could not offer you before poor Mrs. Macdoual, becauſe ſhe did not know I had it: for I can't refuſe her if ſhe aſks me, and laſt year I left myſelf without money to pay for my waſhing, and little odd things, to preſerve a little peace; ſo I reſolved, as I don't love to be in debt to poor creatures that want it, to keep a ſmall ſum that I would not break in upon but for neceſſary uſes.—I think, my dear, reſumed the good lady, after a momentary pauſe—"what is your Chriſtian name?"

"Roſella, madam."

"Aye, I recollect Sophy called you Roſella in her letters. You put me in mind of Sophy; ſhe was a pretty girl, but you are ſtill prettier;—I would not tell you ſo if you was a vain huſſy—but I am ſure you are not vain."

"I hope not, madam," returned Roſella, "and as I much wiſh for the good opinion of my friends, I hope I ſhall never become any thing they diſapprove."

"Aye now, that is talking like a ſenſible young woman.—My dear, I wanted to tell you yeſterday, only there was ſuch a turmoil in the houſe

houſe—there always is, I think!—I wanted to tell you, that as you have loſt a friend in poor Sophy, without any fault of your own, you ſhall find another in me. I am not apt to take likings to young folks—indeed Janet, and Iſabel, and the reſt of them have ſickened me of young girls; but whether it was that you put me in mind of Sophy yeſterday when you offered me your arm, or how it was I can't tell, but I have been thinking almoſt all night that I will be your friend."

Roſella burſt into tears, and kiſſed the hand which Mrs. Delaval held out to her but could not articulate a ſyllable. The good lady preſſed her in her arms, and repeated—

"Poor Sophy! I little thought, when I left her in England, I ſhould ever hear ſuch a ſad account!—I am afraid ſhe grieved about the inconſtancy of ſome lover—Ah my dear child, guard your heart from the wiles of men——they are deceitful, ungrateful creatures!"

This hint brought Oberne to the recollection of Roſella, and ſhe feared, if his attendance upon her ſhould reach the knowledge of Mrs. Delaval, ſhe might loſe the kind *protectrice* her better fortune had ſo oppurtunely afforded her; and the heighhtened color in her cheeks proclaimed that the admonition was not premature.

"Well, well," reſumed the good lady, "I ſhall ſay no more now, for I am ſure you are a prudent girl by your coming here to me. And ſo, my dear, you will conſult Jamie Campbell, and let me know what he ſays; for I am impatient to hear if, with what you ſo kindly offer to lend me, and my own little mite put to it, we can get to London in any way. I

am

am quite bent upon going with you; for I think when the winter comes on, and it's bitterly cold here, if I ſtay I ſhall catch a fixed rheumatiſm in my poor lame leg, and be helpleſs perhaps all my life afterwards."

"I fear it will be very inconvenient to you to travel juſt now, madam," ſaid Roſella, who had not till that moment thought of the circumſtance."

"I ſhall not mind that," replied Mrs. Delaval, haſtily, "I ſhall not mind that. I ſhall not die happy unleſs I ſee poor Sophy once again; and perhaps, poor thing, ſhe will know me, and be glad to ſee me.—But, child, I had almoſt forgot to tell you that you muſt write what Jamie Campbell ſays about the coſts of the journey, and give the letter with your own hands to Mally, for I can truſt her—ſhe is a faithful creature!—I am afraid to ſay any thing to Mrs. Macdoual; it is ſo natural for her to tell her huſband all ſhe knows, though ſhe never means amiſs.—When I get to England, I ſhall not want a ſupply of money; for there is a perſon in London whom I formerly ſerved, who will lend me, I am ſure, a reaſonable ſum to go on with till my dividend becomes due, which will be in leſs than two months; ſo I am eaſy in that reſpect. And when I get back to London, I ſhall not forget, as I ſaid before, your kindneſs to me here in a ſtrange country, where I am not well looked upon, I believe, becauſe I was bred up differently as to religion; but I will not be brow-beat out of my own way of worſhip, or go to the kirks here, when in my own mind I like the Church of England beſt, becauſe that is the worſhip I have been uſed to Mr. Macdoual to be ſure may think—"

The

The lady of the houſe now ran into the room, ſaying—

" Come, my poor love, you have had a long confab; it is time for Miſs Mountereſa to be gone, for my huſband will be back ſhortly—and there's Janet as prying as an imp; I'm ſure ſhe ſuſpects miſchief, and then her tongue will be at work to tell her father all—ſo there will be a fine hubbub by and by amongſt us!"

" I will go immediately," ſaid Roſella, ſtarting up to prevent the cataſtrophe thus foretold.

" God bleſs you, my dear!" ejaculated Mrs. Delaval; " I am ſorry to let you go without your dinner———it ſeems ſo hard to ſend you away without aſking you to dine."

" Oh if that be all," interrupted Mrs. Macdoual, " I can ſend her ſome porridge and a neck-of-mutton bone, without its being at all miſſed."

" No, I beg you will not," ſaid Roſella; " the good woman where I lodge will get me ſomething, for ſhe is very obliging."

" Tell her, my dear," ſaid Mrs. Delaval, who appeared much hurt, " that I take it very kind of her; but as to our Scotch porridge, I am ſure you would not like it——it was a long time before I could get uſed to it myſelf."

Roſella ſecretly hoped that ſhe would not much longer be compelled to receive ill-treatment and meagre fare; and when, after being huſtled out of the houſe, ſhe returned to her lodgings, ſhe could not prevail with herſelf to eat her own dinner, from the idea that would obtrude of Mrs. Delaval's unpalatable and embittered meal.

She

She forgot not to conſult with Jamie, as ſhe had been enjoined to do, who told her that he could not at all gueſs at the expence of ſuch a long journey, but he promiſed to enquire. When he withdrew, Nancy, who had been preſent at the conference, ſaid that talking of money put her in mind that ſhe had four guineas belonging to her poor Lady, who had given her five to keep houſe only the day before they left the cottage, and ſhe had paid away twenty ſhillings and ſix-pence for things had there, which Menie and Maclean could prove.

Roſella was much pleaſed to hear this, but deſired her to keep the money and her account till they arrived in London, and then ſhe would have it ſettled. Not daring, however, to truſt her with Mrs. Delaval's ſecret, ſhe did not inform her that ſhe hoped to procure her a good place immediately; and Nancy was not at all anxious upon the ſubject, as ſhe thought that in London good places would infallibly ſhower down ſo faſt, that ſhe would have nothing to do but to chuſe the moſt agreeable.

In the afternoon Roſella condeſcended to admit her as a companion in her promenade, which would have been a moſt melancholy one, had not the promiſed friendſhip of Mrs. Delaval intervened to calm her inquietudes on her own account; and her propoſed journey to England inſpired her with a lively hope that Miſs Beauclerc, by her interference, might be reſcued from the power of her hateful and ſelfiſh couſin.

She followed the courſe of the river towards the Solway Frith, and was much amuſed by the buſy ſcene it preſented; but the *delaſſement* of

of the mind will not always prevent the feet from tiring, and she was at length turning back, when the well-known figure of Oberne appeared at a little distance hastening to meet her. Rosella was immediately seized with a little trepidation that rather retarded her progress, and when they met, he enquired if she had not too much fatigued herself.

Nancy recollecting what she would have expected of another, had she been Miss Montresor, followed the golden rule, and very cleverly dropped behind them to admire a fishing-boat that was passing.

"How does the fair Rosella like the old aunt?" continued Oberne; "but, if I understand right, you are not in the house with her. Has she disappointed your expectations?"

"On the contrary," returned she, "Mrs. Delaval is much more favorably disposed towards me than I had any reason to hope. But the family she is with—"

"Are devils!" interrupted Oberne.—"You find I have learned something since I entered Dumfries."

"But this circumstance," resumed Rosella, "is so far in my favor, that I believe it will be one motive to induce the poor lady to accompany me to London.

"If so," said he with abrupt gravity, "my guardianship ends here."

"But not my gratitude," replied Rosella.

Oberne turned away, and hummed part of an air.

"This scene is pleasing," exclaimed he, suddenly interrupting the melody.

"I think it is," replied Rosella rather embarrassed, and the conversation dropped.

"When

"When do you quit Dumfries?" enquired he, after an interval of several minutes.

"I really do not know: my motions will now depend upon the convenience of Mrs. Delaval, unless my guardian sends to me in the interim; and then, perhaps, she will have the goodness to make my prescribed time her's."

"I think I have heard you mention the name of your guardian?"

"Very likely," said Rosella innocently; "it is Ellinger."

"And he generally resides in London?"

"Always."

"In the city perhaps.——I suppose he is some monied man who takes great care of your fortune."

"And very little of my person, I believe you think," returned she; "and if that is the case, his cares are not very extensive, for my fortune is a very slender one."

"Be thankful," cried Oberne, "that you are not cursed with great riches. I am much obliged to *my* destiny likewise, that such a stumbling-block to virtue never lay in my way?"

Rosella smiled, and another pause ensued.

"Did you say," demanded Oberne suddenly, "that your guardian, Mr. Ellinger, lived in the city?"

"He lives in Chancery-lane," replied she.

"Horrid place!" exclaimed Oberne; "I never hear the name of it but I instantly recollect an atrocious old villain, who received ten guineas for scribbling over an infernal parchment so carelessly that it more than half ruined

ruined me; and when I remonſtrated upon his negligence, he afforded me the particular conſolation of learning that he had never practiſed in that particular line, and had merely done it to oblige me!"

"I never ſuffered in the ſame way," ſaid Roſella, ſmiling, "but I diſlike the place, I think, as much as you do."

"Do you then live there?"

"I called it my home, ſhe replied, ſighing; "but the friendſhip with which Miſs Beauclerc has diſtinguiſhed me from childhood, withdrew me from a reſidence I could not love."

The enquiries he had made led her to reflect upon the peculiarities of her ſituation; and his ſurpriſe on finding that Mr. Ellinger's abode was her's, brought to her imagination a circumſtance that had never before appeared ſo ſingular to her:—ſhe had never heard of one relative, either of the family of her father or her mother; and ſome vague conjectures floated on her mind, concerning the pretended diſcovery of Miſs Beauclerc's affinity.

"I thought when I met you," ſaid Oberne, breaking the ſilence, "that we had been much farther from the town. How is it that we have already reached it?"

"I had the ſame idea of its diſtance," obſerved Roſella; "we were both miſtaken."

"Lord! I thought for my part," exclaimed Nancy, who had now approached them, "that we ſhould never get here; but there is nothing like chatting and pleaſant company to be ſure, to paſs the time away."

Roſella bluſhed; and Oberne heard the obſervation in ſilence, which Nancy thought very odd,

odd, becauſe he was ſuch a pleaſant gentleman that had always ſomething merry to ſay.

When they were near the habitation of Jamie Campbell, Roſella turned to him, and ſaid ſhe muſt wiſh him good evening.

"I wiſh you ten thouſand," returned he: "do not however imagine this farewell is to laſt for a year or two. I ſhall remain at Dumfries, I believe, till you leave it, and then we will ſee which of us, with equal ſincerity, can outvie the other in good wiſhes."

He then ſuffered her to walk forward without him; and ſhe could not forbear reflecting, for ſome time afterwards, upon the variations in his countenance and manner, which had taken place during their interview.

CHAP. XIV.

Farewel wiſhes—A reſcue from the tyranny of very humble friends.

WHEN ſhe retired to her apartment, Mrs. Campbell entered, to ſay that Jamie had been at home, and left word for the young lady that Mrs. Fraſer, the merchant's weef, had been to London, ſome years back, for five pounds; but that every thing was dearer now; and beſides ſhe had a large family of children, and only the ſhop to live upon, ſo ſhe went as cheap as a prudent woman could do.

Roſella was pleaſed with this ſtatement, which did not overthrow the plan of Mrs. Delaval,

laval, even if her eagerneſs to leave Dumfries ſhould induce her to begin the journey, before Mr. Ellinger's economic deliberations had arrived at an active concluſion.

It was twilight when Mally ſtole in to ſay, the young leddy maun gie her the latter noo, for ſhe munna ſta, or her maiſter wad raiſe the deil in the hooſe; and Roſella having fortunately juſt written a billet to Mrs. Delaval, gave it to the girl, with a charge to deliver it privately, which Mally already underſtood ſhe was to do.

Much however as ſhe was hurried, ſhe could not forbear ſtaying to tell Jamie Campbell's wife, that, e'er ſin yeſtreen, poor Maiſtreſs Dalaval had led the leefe of a dog.

Roſella overheard this intelligence, and wiſhed ſhe could have applied a pair of wings to Mally's feet, that the poor old lady might the ſooner learn the information ſhe carried.

She would not venture the next morning to approach Macdoual's houſe, but waited at home in the hope that Mrs. Delaval would find an opportunity of ſending to her; nor was ſhe miſtaken—Mally came with a note, but could not wait for an anſwer, not even a verbal one.

The billet informed Roſella that after receiving her's, ſhe had plucked up courage, and mentioned her intention to Mr. Macdoual; but whether he imagined ſhe was not in earneſt, or that he thought this ſudden reſolution was a mere whim that would never be put in practice, ſhe could not tell, but he had taken no notice of what ſhe ſaid any further than by being in a worſe humour than uſual; and that ſhe was ſo anxious to be gone before the ſtorm broke, that ſhe would try to be ready on the following day, though ſhe feared there would be ſome difficulty in getting out of the houſe.

Roſella

Roſella thought ſo too; but ſhe was rather encouraged in the afternoon, to learn by Mally, who returned to know if ſhe could leave Dumfries by the time mentioned, that Mr. Macdoual had gone a journey, and his wife could tell where, only ſhe thought it muſt be to Gallowway; and there had been a great brawl amoong 'em aw, and ſhe had heard her maiſtreſs cry and bewail herſel, becauſe her maiſter had not left ony ſiller to buy victuals, and poor Mrs. Delaval had nae ony to gie her.

Roſella eaſily diſcerned the meaning of this: Macdoual wiſhed to try if his inmate had any ſecret hoard by her, which he imagined the diſtreſs of the moment would make her betray ---a circumſtance he would not long be ignorant of, notwithſtanding his pretended abſence; and that if he were aſſured ſhe was actually deſtitute of money, he would ſtay out of the way to avoid any application, until the fancy of returning to England died away. Roſella wrote therefore, a haſty note to Mrs. Delaval, entreating her to perſevere in her aſſertion that ſhe had no caſh by her, and to keep ſecret the time of her quitting Dumfries.

She had ſcarcely diſpatched Mally back with it, when a ſtranger enquired of Nancy at the door for Miſs Montreſor; ſhe ran in to Roſella, and replied to her queſtions, that he was an elderly man, very plain in his dreſs, and that he did not look very good-humoured.

"Who can this be?" thought Roſella; and the ſcene at Dunkeld ruſhing into her memory, ſhe dreaded the malice of Macdoual, and trembled leſt this perſon ſhould be an emiſſary of vengeance. She imagined however that ſhe muſt ſee him, and deſired Nancy to introduce him into a little parlour ſhe occupied.

As

As he entered, ſhe beheld a man in the decline of life, as Nancy had deſcribed him, of a very ſedate aſpect, who preſented her a letter from Mr. Mordaunt, and ſaid he had been commiſſioned by him to conduct her and her attendant to London. The heart of Roſella beat with delight on hearing this propitious ſentence, and ſhe haſtily tore open her letter, which ſhe found to be kind and even paternal. He promiſed to explain when they met why he had not replied to her application, which had not nevertheleſs been neglected; he lamented the many unpleaſant circumſtances that had befallen her, mentioned that Mr. Ellinger had communicated her laſt letter to him, and deſired her to return immediately to England, when he hoped to arrange matters upon a better plan in future, and he would exert himſelf to obliterate the miſchievous effects of the paſt.

Roſella was ſo charmed with this proof of the good man's regard, that even his meſſenger, Mr. Williams, appeared to her a ſuperior ſort of beneficent being;—ſhe entreated that he would ſit, and take ſome refreſhment; but the latter part of the requeſt he declined, ſaying he had ordered a dinner at an inn.

She then mentioned, that if he ſhould not be too much fatigued on the following day or the day after, to reſume his journey, ſhe ſhould wiſh to comply with Mr. Mordaunt's injunction of an immediate return; and that having received a propoſal from Mrs. Delaval of travelling with her, ſhe hoped ſhe might be ſo far indulged as to accept it.

Mr. Williams, who was deſcribed in the letter Roſella had juſt read, to be the father of a family, and a confidential agent of the writer, after a moment of conſideration, ſaid that he

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed Mr. Mordaunt could not but highly approve of ſuch a circumſtance, which he thought had the appearance of being a very deſirable thing.

"I was ſurpriſed, madam," added he, "at not finding you with the lady at Mr. Macdoual's whither indeed I have not yet been; for I happened, by accident, to enquire of a girl coming out of this houſe, the way I ought to take, which I could not perfectly underſtand from the people of the inn, and I accidentally diſcovered that you lodged here, which ſaved me an uſeleſs peregrination."

Roſella, in reply, made him acquainted with the ſituation of Mrs. Delaval, and the many diſtreſſing cauſes that forced her to return to England; and Mr. Williams liſtened with evident indignation and aſtoniſhment at the villanous machinations of one party, and the helpleſs imbecility of the other. He thought it adviſable to take the poor lady immediately out of the hands of the Macdouals, and promiſed Roſella to accompany her the next morning to their houſe, to endeavour to effect this. But he much doubted, from the account of her diſaſter, which Roſella had not omitted, whether ſhe would be able to travel at any rate; and he propoſed, when he had dined, to look out for a more eligible and ſpacious lodging where Mrs. Delaval and herſelf might continue to reſide, if his ſurmiſes were juſt.

Mr. Williams then withdrew, leaving Roſella much more tranquil than ſhe had found herſelf for ſome time paſt.

She would not in the evening repeat her walk, leſt ſhe ſhould appear to ſeek Oberne; but ſhe felt this ſelf-denial more forcibly than ſhe would confeſs to herſelf, and was not in very good ſpirits,

ſpirits, when Nancy ſuddenly introduced him without any previous ceremony, as ſhe imagined ſuch a kind friend ſhould not be treated like any body one did not care for.

"I hear," ſaid he gravely, "that your eſcort is arrived; perhaps you can now tell me when you leave Dumfries."

Roſella repeated the converſation ſhe had had with Mr. Williams concerning the poor lady at Macdoual's, and added that her departure ſtill depended upon her.

"My enquiry," reſumed Oberne, "was merely from idle curioſity, I believe; for as I now conſider you now to be ſafe in harbour, I am come only with intention of bidding you adieu.—I muſt haſten to London."

Roſella felt the color fade on her cheeks.

"Are you going immediately!" aſked ſhe hardly known what ſhe ſaid.

"I ſhall ſet off the moment I leave you," replied Oberne; then aſſuming a gayer air, "and yet," he added, "my buſineſs, when I arrive in London, will not be of a kind to reward ſuch expedition; for, to ſay the truth, I have by ſome means, I cannot exactly ſay how, played the devil, and left myſelf the pleaſant alternative of ſtarving in England, or accepting a commiſſion in a regiment ordered to the Weſt Indies, which my generous and diſintereſted brother very obligingly offers to procure me."

"You are not going to the Weſt Indies?" ſaid Roſella, with an aſpect of concern.

"You would not wiſh to ſee me ſweeping the ſtreets!" returned he, making an unſucceſsful effort to appear lively.

"You ſhock me?" exclaimed Roſella, ſhuddering involuntarily.

"I will endeavour to ſhock you no longer," replied he, taking her hand; "receive then my parting wiſhes for your future undiſturbed peace of mind, your happineſs, and proſperity.—Do not wholly exclude the giddy, the imprudent Oberne from your recollection; and wherever his deſtiny or his follies ſhall have baniſhed him, he will not be entirely miſerable."

At the concluſion of this ſpeech he kiſſed the hand he held, and ſuddenly left her; whilſt Roſella remained in ſuch confuſion, ſuch ſurpriſe, ſuch regret at his departure, that ſhe attempted no reply whilſt he was ſtill in ſight, and when ſhe could no longer diſcern him, ſhe exclaimed with Orlando—"Can I not ſpeak to him—can I not ſay I thank you!"

All that was amiable in the character of Oberne roſe to her remembrance—all that ſhe had originally diſapproved in it, had, for ſome time paſt, faded from her memory; and ſhe wept that a diſpoſition ſo unaffectedly generous, a nature ſo open, ſo frank, ſo undiſguiſed, ſhould be accompanied by ſuch a careleſs and incorrigible negligence to the attention every man ſhould render to his circumſtances, if he would preſerve amidſt his fellow-beings of the ſame gradation of rank, an independence of opinion, of conduct, and of ſituation.

It was late before ſhe retired to reſt; and ere her eye-lids cloſed in ſleep, a violent ſtorm of wind, of rain, of lightning, and tremendous thunder, made her tremble for the unhappy traveller, whom ſhe repreſented to herſelf on his paſſage acroſs the Solway Frith, expoſed to the heightened fury of the tempeſt.

The moſt unpleaſant images troubled her repoſe after the ſubſiding of this jar of elements; and ſhe had ſcarcely breakfaſted the

next morning, when Mr. Williams appeared to attend her to Macdoual's.

He had brought with him a poſt-chaiſe, to convey Mrs. Delaval from the ſcene of purgatorial diſcord and civil war, in which ſhe had exiſted ſo many years; and Roſella feeling but half aſſured from his protection, and more than half fearful of the brutality of Macdoual ſhould he be returned, the hyena lamentations of his wife, and the clamor of their hopeful progeny, ſtepped into it, to be the ſooner conveyed to the ſcene of contention, and as ſhe hoped, the ſooner conveyed from it.

Mr. Williams rung at the bell ſeveral times unattended to; and at length, tired of an application ſo fruitleſs, he entered a paſſage, and opening a ſitting-room, beheld Mrs. Delaval, ſuch from the deſcription of Roſella he concluded her to be, weeping very tenderly over her friend, whom ſhe repeatedly promiſed to remember in her will, and to remit to her what ſums ſhe could ſpare from her yearly expenditure.

"I have taken the liberty of interrupting you, madam," ſaid Mr. Williams, "to inform you that Miſs Montreſor is at the door. She is in a carriage, which perhaps you would wiſh to make uſe of in your removal; but ſhe deſires me to ſay ſhe will await your leiſure, if you are not quite ready to accompany her."

"Yes," cried Mrs. Delaval eagerly, "I am quite ready!"

"Oh, for God's ſake, don't go!" exclaimed Mrs. Macdoual; "I ſhall die with grief if I loſe you; and beſides my huſband will kill me for letting you go!"

This double menace of dying with grief, and being killed into the bargain, appeared very

much to diſtreſs poor Mrs. Delaval, who endeavoured however to conſole her, by ſaying ſhe would write very often, and ſtill repeating that ſhe would not forget her promiſes.

"And what ſignifies writing," retorted the afflicted lady, "when I ſhan't have money to pay for your letters.—Oh dear, dear! Mr. Macdoual will be worſe than ever; and I and my poor children won't have rags to cover us, nor victuals to put into our mouths."

Mrs. Delaval could not hear this doleful prophecy without weeping anew; and Mr. Williams, fearing that her reſolution would yield to a momentary compaſſion, thought proper to interpoſe.

"I underſtood, madam," ſaid he, addreſſing Mrs. Macdoual, "that this lady wiſhed to return to her native air for the benefit of her health, which Miſs Montreſor thought had been injured."

"No!" replied ſhe, in all the fury of impotent paſſion, to which a weak mind will yield itſelf, "No! it is becauſe that Miſs has wheedled herſelf into favour, and can't bear that I and my children ſhould be bettered as well as herſelf!—I wiſh I had known her fawning tricks, and ſhe ſhould as ſoon have flown up to the moon, as have come into this houſe, mincing and carnying!—But I ſhall let her know that I have had Mrs. Delaval for my friend theſe twenty years and more; and every body muſt ſay I have a better right to keep her here in my family, than that girl has to take her away!"

"It appears to me, madam," ſaid the gentleman gravely, "that you are arguing and planning without conſulting the inclinations or convenience of your friend: and indeed you

are

are not paying a grateful compliment to the underſtanding of Mrs. Delaval, by ſuppoſing that, if her own affairs did not lead her to undertake the journey to England, the perſuaſion of a young lady, almoſt a ſtranger to her, would have ſufficient weight to carry her thither."

"Then, if ſhe is a ſtranger," returned Mrs. Macdoual, in a crying voice, "why does my poor dear want to go with her, away from us all? She uſed to hate ſtrangers ſo much, that we none of us thought of her playing us this trick. And then, what affairs can ſhe have in England? Don't my huſband manage all her affairs! I'm ſure ſhe has never any trouble with her money. But pray, Sir, who may you be!"

"I am a plain man, madam," replied Mr. Williams calmly, "which you may eaſily diſcern; and I endeavour to be an honeſt man.—The guardian of Miſs Montreſor, and another perſon intereſted in her welfare, have employed me to conduct her to them. This, madam, and what the meſſage I brought from the young lady implies, is all, I preſume, that you wiſh to be acquainted with."

"The meſſage from her truly! Yes, a fine meſſage from her; and you, Sir, may take one from me—ſo pray tell her ſhe is a wheedling, good-for-nothing, young viper!"

"My dear, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Delaval, "I muſt ſay this is not pretty!—I muſt ſay——"

"What," interrupted the poor woman, wiping the dew from her forehead, "is ſhe to come to take the bread out of my mouth, and an't I to ſpeak?"

Several ſcreams, that appeared to proceed from the ſpot where Roſella was waiting, now attracted the immediate attention of Mrs. Delaval,

laval, who was too well enabled to guess what the outcry meant.

"Oh my God!" cried she, turning pale, "those young furies are murdering the poor child!"

Mr. Williams hastily left the room to protect her, and found that the Miss Macdouals had surrounded the chaise, armed with stones and sticks, which they had been indefatigable in collecting from the moment it arrived; and having at length procured a sufficient quantity of ammunition, they had begun the attack by a general discharge of artillery, in which the post-boy had received a contusion on the head, and one of the windows of the chaise was shivered to pieces.

Fortunately Rosella had found her attention excited by the employment the young ladies had so eagerly followed from her first appearance, and thinking it a very suspicious one, had hastily put up the blinds, before she had suffered any further injury than an inconsiderable bruise on the arm.

The driver, enraged at the assault, had repelled it by force, and employed the thick end of his whip to revenge the damage he had sustained; but the Miss Macdouals had been too well accustomed to their father's discipline to shrink at this, and the man would probably have received further injury, had not Mr. Williams immediately seconded him.

Mrs. Macdoual herself likewise ran out, whose inflamed passions requiring a vent, she flew at her daughters, buffetted their faces, and tore off their hair with a violence of action that shocked every beholder, accompanying the unmatronly correction with invectives, which though

though they were deserved, were not the less ungrateful to the ear.

In the interim Mrs. Delaval crept to the door with the assistance of Mally, who was ever ready to attend her; and invigorated for the moment, by her terrors for Rosella, the poor lady had even approached the chaise to discover if she yet existed. Mr. Williams saw that this opportunity was not to be lost.

"You are not safe, madam," said he, "with such people as these! Let me put you into the chaise."

"Is the young lady there?" asked she, with a trembling voice; "have they not maimed her?"

"I hope not; but it is impossible to say what their renewed violence may not effect."

"Let us be gone," whispered Mrs. Delaval, with increasing tremor, "let us be gone! My clothes may be sent for. I had rather lose every thing than suffer any mischief to happen to that good young creature!"

Mr. Williams called to the driver, who instantly obeyed the summons; they raised the lady between them into the chaise, Mr. Williams followed, and they were almost out of sight before Mrs. Macdoual was sensible of the evasion of her *poor dear*.

When Mrs. Delaval no longer beheld the spot where she had lingered so many years of tasteless existence, she seemed to breathe a purer air; her spirits, lightened of an insupportable load, gave fresh animation to her countenance; and Rosella, the latent cause of her emancipation, rose in her esteem and affection in proportion as she felt a return of peace and ease to a bosom from whence they had long been banished.

Mr.

Mr. Williams was, beſides what he had deſcribed himſelf to be in anſwer to the enquiry of Mrs. Macdoual, a man of quick apprehenſion and diſcernment: he knew of the hiſtory of Roſella, as much as related to the unfortunate conſequences of the eccentricity of Miſs Beauclerc, and preſaged many advantages from the acquiſition of ſo reſpectable a *chaperone*, with whom her return to London would be diveſted of almoſt every unpleaſant circumſtance which might otherwiſe have attended it. He placed Mrs. Delaval and her young companion in the lodgings he had provided, and ſent for Nancy to attend them, whilſt he went to Jamie Campbell's to forward the baggage of Roſella to her new abode, and diſcharge the debt ſhe had incurred by her reſidence there; from thence he proceeded to Macdoual's, to demand the trunks and packages of their late inmate, for which purpoſe he hired a horſe and cart to follow him.

Roſella meantime, exerted herſelf to ſettle Mrs. Delaval in her apartment; and as ſhe obſerved that the ſmalleſt motion of her leg was attended with a pain the poor lady could not ſuppreſs ſome indications of feeling, ſhe begged to know what was uſually done to relieve it.

The ſufferer declined however, having any thing done till Nancy came; but Roſella would not admit of the delay, and ſtill urging her enquiry, ſhe at length diſcovered that Mrs. Macdoual had been both nurſe and ſurgeon, and that her attendance and remedies had been ſlight indeed. Shocked at ſuch cruel neglect, ſhe inſtantly ſent for the beſt medical aſſiſtance the place afforded, not without oppoſition on the part of Mrs. Delaval, who bade her to reflect upon

upon the expence of surgeons, and that if their stock of cash should be lessened, how should they get to England; for she was certain, she said, Macdoual would be so enraged, that he would not let her have any part of the money she had lent him.

Rosella took this opportunity of presenting her the sum she had accepted of Mr. Craufurd, which was yet entire, telling her in what manner it had become her's, and informing her that Mr. Williams would defray her own expences and those of Nancy. Mrs. Delaval was much relieved by this consolatory intelligence, and her only concern now was, the apprehension of not being able to travel immediately.

"I never felt my poor leg so bad before!" exclaimed she; "if you should be obliged to go without me, what would become of me!"

"Depend upon it," said Rosella warmly, "I would not leave Dumfries unless you are in a situation to go likewise!—No, dear madam, after what I have witnessed, I should think myself wanting in gratitude to Miss Beauclerc if I did not attend upon you to England."

"I thank you a thousand times, my dear child," replied Mrs. Delaval; "you are so tender and so kind, that I should be very sorry to part with you, even if I did not fear that Mr. Macdoual would try to get me back.—I thought your guardian would not suffer you to stay perhaps."

Rosella endeavored to re-assure her on this point, and at length succeeded in calming her inquietude before the arrival of the surgeon she had sent for. He ordered immediate and repeated fomentations to the injured part, recommended a nourishing diet, and forbade all motion that could irritate it. Thus was the

journey positively postponed for some time, to the extreme mortification of Mrs. Delaval, who ardently desired to quit Dumfries.

It was almost three hours before Mr. Williams returned with her effects; but he had brought them all, for the invalid had a friend in Mally, to whom at parting, she had been liberal in spite of apprehended poverty; and the girl would not suffer any thing to be detained by her mistress, whom she very little feared or considered in the absence of Macdoual.

Mr. Williams said he had had great difficulty in accomplishing his errand; but he declined at present entering into unpleasant details. He had heard enough however, to induce him to take up his abode in the same house with the injured lady; as Macdoual had been sent to, and his return home expected every hour.

Rosella having communicated to him the injunctions of the surgeon, he wrote the same evening to Mr. Mordaunt, stating the circumstances that detained Miss Montresor and himself, and desiring instructions for his future proceedings.

He was not mistaken in supposing that Macdoual would endeavor to see Mrs. Delaval; but as she had begged that he might not have access to her, Mr. Williams took precautions to prevent him from succeeding; and when he found that the efforts of his wife, who was more fortunate, failed in the great point of drawing the poor lady back to his dwelling, he at length left her to a late repose, with a self-congratulation that he had lost no time whilst it was his good fortune to retain her in his power.

By the cares of Rosella and Nancy, and the attendance of the surgeon, every dangerous symptom was soon reomved, which neglect and agitation

agitation of mind had produced in the invalid. Her general health amended visibly, and, in spite of the recollection of poor Sophy, she was sometimes cheerful.

"I seem, my dear," she often said to her young companion, "to be in heaven—I feel so calm and so easy!—I don't know what I can do to requite you for your goodness to me.—However, I will not forget poor Mrs. Macdoual; for though she is a little hasty and passionate, she is much to be pitied, and was always more civil to me than the rest of the family."

Rosella could not forbear thinking that this kind intention was but little merited; but she was far from presuming to oppose it, and generally received the intimation in silence.

CHAP. XV.

A physician's fiat—reformation in the household of a lady of sentiment.

In a few days an answer arrived from Mr. Mordaunt, who excessively approved what had been done with regard to Mrs. Delaval. He hinted at the extreme importance the continuance of her friendship would be of to Rosella, and as Mr. Williams had mentioned that she was destitute of money, from the encroachments the Macdouals had made upon her income, he desired Rosella would inform her that she must consider Mr. Williams as her banker;

banker; who had received inſtructions, by the ſame poſt, to ſupply the good lady with caſh for her immediate uſe, and for the expences of her journey; and he was likewiſe directed to remain at Dumfries until ſhe could be removed.

In Mr. Mordaunt's letter to Roſella, he further deſired her to inform the aunt of Miſs Beauclerc that her guardian conſented to her reſidence with her as long as it ſhould be agreeable to either party. And Roſella was now ſo much attached to the invalid, by the mildneſs of her temper, the ſimplicity of her manners, and the goodneſs of her heart, that ſhe was herſelf delighted with the permiſſion, and haſtened to impart it to her.

Mrs. Delaval wept from ſatisfaction; ſhe no longer feared the diminution of her little ſtock of money. Nancy was inſtalled into her ſervice in due form, and in leſs than a fortnight ſhe was enabled to move ſouthward by eaſy ſtages. But when ſhe found herſelf once more on Engliſh ground, ſhe forgot all her ailments; and a letter meeting her at Carliſle from Mr. Mordaunt, to haſten her journey, by the intelligence it communicated that he much doubted the inſanity of her niece from the reſult of ſome information he had been ſolicitous to obtain, and that her preſence might be extremely uſeful, ſhe would no longer be reſtrained by ſelf-conſideration from advancing with a rapidity highly imprudent: yet the repreſentations of Mr. Williams, and the entreaty of Roſella, could not engage her to moderate it.

"What was her worthleſs life," ſhe ſaid, "in compariſon with the hope of alleviating the confinement of poor Sophy, or freeing her from the power of a mercenary villain, if there were no juſt grounds for it."

By

By the time they reached London, the injury her leg had originally ſuſtained, wore the ſame appearance, and was ſtill more painful than it had been at Dumfries.—Roſella was much alarmed and afflicted, and only the preſence of Mr. Mordaunt, who welcomed them to England, when they arrived at the apartments he had engaged for the immediate uſe of Mrs. Delaval, could for a moment divert her thoughts from the melancholy preſages that perpetually occupied them.

The good old man embraced Roſella with paternal affection, and congratulated her that ſhe had replaced by her merit, the friend of which misfortune had robbed her.

"I cannot part with her," interrupted Mrs. Delaval; "you muſt not take her from me. I believe ſhe has ſaved my life—and of this I am very ſure, that ſhe contributes much to my happineſs!"

Mr. Mordaunt was pleaſed at this intimation of the favor with which Roſella was viewed by her ancient friend.

"This good girl," ſaid he, "will I am ſure, accept with great ſatisfaction the kind protection you offer her."

Roſella had no difficulty in declaring that ſhe received it with gratitude and delight: but the regret this arrangement renewed for the misfortune of her firſt friend, forced the tears into her eyes, which ſhe was careful, however, to conceal from Mrs. Delaval.

"This affair then," reſumed Mr. Mordaunt, "being ſo ſatisfactorily adjuſted, I muſt now claim a promiſe of Roſella, that ſhe will ſteal an hour to-morrow to viſit my ſiſter, and acknowledge that I have performed a commiſſion with which ſhe entruſted me, to requeſt that our

our young friend would favor her with her company for a few months, unleſs any other engagement prevented her compliance."

Roſella, who imagined this pretended requeſt was merely the reſult of his own delicacy and good-will, thanked him with much energy, and promiſed to attend to his hint.

"I ſhall ſend Philip for you," ſaid Mr. Mordaunt; "for you muſt accuſtom yourſelf to recollect that you are not in a country village, and that in this noiſy place you muſt not indulge in contemplative rambles without an Eſquire in your ſuite."

He then informed Mrs. Delaval that he had begun a proceeding againſt Mr. Briſtock, in which he had taken the liberty of employing her name, and he hoped it would be ſucceſsful.

"If," he added, "your niece is really ſane, which I have ſome reaſon to ſuppoſe, I truſt that her paſt danger will henceforth teach her to pay a little more deference to the eſtabliſhed uſages of ſociety than I hear ſhe has lately done."

Roſella colored at the concluſion of this ſpeech, and felt as though it had glanced at her; but Mr. Mordaunt bade her adieu with the ſame friendly aſpect with which he had accoſted her, and a ſudden apprehenſion ſhe had conceived, that her laſt interviews with Oberne had reached his ears, ſubſided.

The following morning, at the requeſt of Mrs. Delaval, ſhe wrote two or three notes in her name: one of them was addreſſed to a perſon who had formerly conducted her affairs, and the others to ſome female friends, with whom ſhe had aſſociated on intimate terms before

fore Mrs. Macdoual had so wholly engrossed her favor.

A porter was dispatched with them to their several destinations; but, alas! it was found that only the man of business remained in the same situation in which Mrs. Delaval had left him twenty years back; and the reason perhaps was, that not being then a young man, he had already made his bed in the same corner for almost the same number of years. The ladies were either dead, or had quitted London to Tabithise at Bath, or had dropped into dowager's quarters, where dowager's incomes would support them.

Mrs. Delaval raised her hands and eyes, exclaiming with a look of consternation—

"Little did I think when I left London, that at my return I should find things so changed!—But if I can but see poor Sophy once more in her senses, and you, my dear Rosella, are not tired of staying with me, I shall be happy still.

Rosella assured her, and with sincerity, of her attachment: and it was not by words only that she chose to demonstrate it; for since their departure from Dumfries she had been indefatigable herself, and as constantly directed the cares of Nancy, to fulfil the prescriptions of the medical person there; and perhaps without her unceasing attentions, poor Mrs. Delaval had never reached London. Yet spite of her efforts, spite of a night of repose undisturbed, the countenance of the invalid exhibited when she rose, those signs of half-concealed pain the affection of Rosella had taught her to discern, and she had given an additional commission to the portet, to call at the house of Dr. D——, who had attended the family

of

of Mr. Beauclerc, and whose address she well remembered, with a request to visit Mrs. Delaval immediately.

It happened fortunately that Dr. D—— recollected the name of the lady he was thus unexpectedly called upon to attend; and he obeyed the summons before Rosella was compelled to leave the house. She was present at the interview, and was much pleased to observe that the face of Mrs. Delaval brightened on finding herself addressed by an old acquaintance; but her satisfaction was completely damped when the Doctor, whom she attended into an anti-chamber, replied to her enquiries that he feared no effort of skill or attention could do more than sooth the last moments of the poor lady he had just quitted, whose constitution was too much weakened to surmount the mischief she had sustained; and he thought it but too probable that the extreme poverty of her blood might produce a mortification. He added that he would take the necessary steps that the invalid should immediately have proper attendance, and he would repeat his call the next morning.

He then withdrew, leaving Rosella thunderstruck at the suddeness of this cruel intelligence, which though she had almost foreseen, was not the less shocking to her. She repented that she had promised to visit Mrs. Methwald, and when Philip was announced to be in waiting, she meditated to send an excuse; but recollecting that Mr. Mordaunt ought immediately to be informed of the opinion of Dr. D——, and half-fearing to trust so important a communication to a note, which an accident might prevent him from receiving or reading perhaps for half a day, she determined at length to go.

She

She ran to the chamber of Mrs. Delaval to bid her adieu, and to charge Nancy to be very attentive to her Lady in her abſence; a caution not wholly unneceſſary, as the girl's ſenſes had, from the firſt moment of her approaching London, ruſhed to her eyes and ears, and it was with much perſuaſion only ſhe could be dragged from a window to take her meals.

It was now the middle of a warm autumn, and Roſella traverſed the half-deſerted ſtreets with a ſenſation of melancholy the local drearineſs of the ſcene increaſed; and Philip had knocked at the door of his maſter's houſe before ſhe recovered from a mournful reverie, in which Miſs Beauclerc, Oberne, and Mrs. Delaval had almoſt an equal ſhare.

She obſerved a carriage in waiting, and was vexed at a circumſtance which indicated that Mrs. Methwald was not alone; for ſhe had hoped, as the ſeaſon was ſo far advanced, that ſhe was in no danger of meeting any perſon of ſuch pretenſions to diſtinction, as the extreme faſhion and gaiety of the equipage ſeemed to announce.

Mr. Mordaunt iſſued from his ſtudy on the ground floor, to accompany Roſella up ſtairs, when Philip informed him of her arrival; but the diſtreſs of her countenance ſo much ſtruck him, that he waved his intention whilſt he enquired the reaſon of her uncommon depreſſion.

Roſella, who had with difficulty repreſſed her tears in the ſtreet, now found herſelf unequal to the effort; and Mr. Mordaunt, with much tenderneſs of manner, took her into the room he had juſt quitted, where he learned the extreme danger in which Mrs. Delaval was

pro-

pronounced to be, and appeared much ſtartled by the intelligence.

"Is it ſo indeed!" exclaimed he; "Dr. D—— is not in general a croaker.—I muſt—well, my dear----compoſe yourſelf-----there, walk up ſtairs, my ſiſter is quite alone, I believe.—I muſt go immediately.—Here, Philip, ſend to Mr. Williams---no, ſtay I will call myſelf in my way there—aye—My dear, don't hurry back—that is without going to Chancery-lane;—it would be proper to ſee Ellinger directly, and tell him how I have ſettled matters for your reſidence with Mrs. Delaval----he will underſtand.---There--good morning---God bleſs you!"

This incoherent ſpeech excited the alarm of Roſella, who had always obſerved a collected calmneſs in her old friend entirely remarkable; but as he had diſappeared at the cloſe of it, ſhe had no alternative but to follow his intimation, and walk up ſtairs to the apartment where Mrs. Methwald conſtantly gave audience.

She forgot to ring for a ſervant to announce her; for though Mr. Mordaunt had ſpoken to Philip, there was no Philip near to receive his commands; ſhe forgot likewiſe the tears on her cheeks, and opening the drawing-room door, found herſelf ſuddenly not only in the preſence of Mrs. Methwald, but ſubject to the aſtoniſhed gaze of her peerleſs daughter, and the more indignant glance of a very lovely woman, to whom the other ladies, ſhe obſerved, were earneſtly liſtening, when her entrance diſconcerted the party.

A ſilence of ſome moments rendered the ſituation of Roſella ſtill more embarraſſing. Mrs. Methwald colored a dingy crimſon, and every feature denoted vexation and unconquer-

ed

ed confuſion, whilſt a thouſand apophthegms ruſhed to her aſſiſtance, but not one that could extricate either of the party from their mute agitation.

Roſella, ſurpriſed at ſo uncommon a reception, and imagining that her unannounced appearance might have contributed to it, with ſome difficulty ſtammered an apology; but what could an apology avail, of which not a word could be diſtinguiſhed; and what did the philoſophy of the perfect Mrs. Creſſy avail, ſince it could not, like a wiſhing-cap, convey her inviſibly from a place where ſhe began to apprehend, that for the firſt time in her life, ſhe had committed herſelf? What likewiſe could it avail the lovely ſtranger, that ſhe had gratified by a narrative ſhe had juſt given in ſtrong tints, a jealous pique her candor condemned, when the tears ſhe now diſcerned in the eyes of the intruder, her conſcience whiſpered to her ſhe had perhaps wrung from a heart already humbled and diſtreſſed! Roſella was far from gueſſing that compunction had followed the ſcornful look ſhe had obſerved, or that Mrs. Methwald was meditating how to reconcile contrary intereſts by being civil to her, whilſt ſhe preſerved inviolate her reſpect for Lady Morteyne, whoſe condeſcending attentions were ſo grateful to Mrs. Creſſy, and who promiſed to become the Cynoſure of ſeveral ſeaſons, from her youth, her beauty, her title, and her recent marriages; for the lovely ſtranger was in fact, the very thorn Miſs Beauclerc ſo politely informed Lord Morteyne he was binding to his boſom.

Roſella feeling her ſpirit riſe againſt the rude contempt with which ſhe conceived herſelf to have been treated, coldly ſaid that ſhe

was

was extremely ſorry her viſit had been ſo extremely ill-timed; and ſhutting the drawing-room door, from which ſhe had not advanced, ſhe walked down ſtairs, and returning to the ſtudy, rung for a ſervant, whom ſhe begged to procure her a chair.

Then taking up a book, ſhe ſat down, not to read, but to reflect with indignation upon the ſtrange behaviour of Mrs. Methwald and her companions. Had ſhe not been led by Mr. Mordaunt to ſuppoſe that his ſiſter would receive her with kindneſs, ſhe might have concluded that the reports ſo injuriouſly ſpread, had reached her ear, and that ſhe did not diſcredit them; but he had even more than indirectly deſired her to thank Mrs. Methwald for an invitation ſhe had ſent by him, to reſide with her ſeveral months; and ſhe could not reconcile ſuch a mark of favor with the reception ſhe had juſt experienced.

She had not heard the ſervant quit the houſe on the commiſſion ſhe had given him, and fearing ſhe might yet be detained ſome time, was opening the door to enquire, when a voice in the hall, which ſhe thought ſhe was not unacquainted with, caught her attention: it aſked if Lady (ſhe could not diſtinguiſh the name) were not there?

"There is a lady here, Sir," replied a lad, who let the enquirer in, "but I did not hear her name. I believe the lady is in my maſter's ſtudy."

So ſaying he opened the door, and uſhered into the apartment where Roſella was—Mr. Leſley.

"Ha! do I ſee Miſs Montreſor?" exclaimed he.

She

She wished to avoid a recognition so unpleasant, and enquired of the domestic, who appeared to be a groom, if any body had procured her a chair.

"John is gone to get one, ma'am," replied he, leaving the room abruptly, to attend to a couple of saddle-horses that hung by the bridle to the railing before the window.

"I had almost forgot, in the unexpected pleasure of meeting you here," resumed Mr. Lesley, "that I have not received your pardon for the offence I was blind and undiscerning enough to commit at Guairdy."

Rosella, who was ardently wishing to leave the house, was listening to every sound from the hall, in the hope of hearing the chair announced; and did not at this moment so much attend to Mr. Lesley as to a bell violently rung, which she concluded was from the drawing-room, immediately followed by a female voice on the stairs.

"Good God!" exclaimed Mrs. Methwald, in a tone of agony, "there is not a creature to let your Ladyship out!" And the bell was again applied to, with still greater perseverance.

Rosella felt like a culprit: she had employed John who ought to have been in waiting; and to perfect her agitation, Mr. Lesley, who had been vainly wasting much elocution in enforcing a petition she scarcely heard, now aimed at rendering it irresistible by dropping on his knee —a movement that sufficiently claimed the attention of Rosella, however it might fail of obtaining her approbation.

"I know myself to be so unpardonable an offender," cried he hastily, as if he had feared an interruption, "that I can hardly expect the indulgence of being heard, unless you——"

The

The door of the ſtudy was now thrown open, and Mrs. Creſſy appeared at it, whoſe crimſon-ſtained lips quivered with horror at ſo atrocious a ſight as that which thus unexpectedly met her round grey eyes. Leſley, whom ſhe had undertaken to inſtruct in botany, and to whom ſhe had actually read the "loves of the plants" whenever ſhe could force him to liſten to it! Leſley, with whom ſhe had ſo frequently argued upon French politics and fine lady philoſophy! Leſley, to whom ſhe had one ſtar-light night, poured out her whole knowledge of aſtronomy, and whom ſhe had diſtinguiſhed from the whole *parterre* at the Opera, and nodded to from her box with ſuch a faſcinating air, and ſo many muſcle working ſmiles! Was it to be endured?——Yes, Mrs. Creſſy endured it, and ſmiled once more!

"Lady Morteyne's ſervants ſaid you were in the houſe," ſaid ſhe, with a ſimper that looked as if it was the effect of acid in the mouth, "and I imagined you muſt be with my uncle; but I perceive you are in more pleaſing ſociety. Your ſiſter may be informed, I ſuppoſe, that you are not immediately at leiſure to attend her.

At this inſtant John returned with the chair, and Roſella was relieved from one of thoſe unpleaſant ſcenes, in which a ſenſation of guilt is experienced in ſpite of conſcious rectitude, and from the mortification of being the object of thoſe oblique cenſures of malice, which muſt be ſelf-appropriated before they can be reſented.

She ſilently curtſied to Mrs. Creſſy; but recollecting as ſhe was placing herſelf in the chair, the kindneſs of Mr. Mordaunt, and his evident wiſh that ſhe ſhould preſerve the good opinion

opinion of his ſiſter, ſhe left her compliments to Mrs. Methwald, with an intimation that ſhe would have the honor of repeating her viſit, and hoped to find her leſs engaged.

"My mother is perfectly alone at preſent" ſaid Mrs. Creſſy, advancing into the hall with an obliging air.

Roſella replied that her time was at preſent circumſcribed from the extreme indiſpoſition of Mrs. Delaval, and that ſhe was compelled, by an injunction of Mr. Mordaunt, to ſee Mr. Ellinger before ſhe returned home, which ſhe wiſhed to haſten as much as poſſible.

The chairmen then trudged away with their burthen: but as they turned out of the houſe, Roſella heard the *ſuaviter in modo* pupil enquire of the groom if his maſter was going to ride; and the lad replied that the horſes had been ordered at half after one, and had not yet been countermanded.

This information brought to her recollection the *impromptu* agitation in which Mr. Mordaunt had left her; and comparing it with the compoſure ſhe had obſerved when they firſt met, ſhe trembled leſt the welfare of Miſs Beauclerc hung upon the life of her aunt.

When ſhe was depoſited however, in the well-known paſſage in Chancery-lane, every gloom gave way to the habitual one with which ſhe entered that houſe. She diſcovered from the people in the office that Mr. Ellinger was not at home, and without further enquiry walked up ſtairs to pay her compliments to the lady of the manſion; but was much ſurpriſed to find in the dining-room a very croſs-looking old woman, ſeated *en maitreſſe*, with a large flaſket of linen by her ſide, ſome of which ſhe appeared

peared to be patching very aſſiduouſly through her ſpectacles.

The good dame looked up on hearing the door open, exclaiming when ſhe beheld Roſella—

"Well, child, and what are you come for?"

"I wiſh to ſee Mrs. Ellinger, madam."

"And pray, my dear, an't I Mrs Ellinger?"

Roſella was embarraſſed; ſhe had never ſeen this perſonage before, but ſuddenly recollected that her guardian had a mother.

"It was the younger Mrs. Ellinger, I wiſhed to ſee, madam," replied ſhe.

"Ho! ſo I thought! what another bill, my life for it, you are a milliner's girl I take it by your fine clothes and jaunty looks.—— Well, we ſhall ſee an end to them, it is to be hoped, before my ſon gets into the King's Bench. However, you need not trouble yourſelf to bring any bills run up ſince the ſecond of this month; I tell you that for a warning; for the good-for-nothing, extravavagant, fine lady trollop went out of theſe doors, bag and baggage, on that bleſſed day! and whilſt I can keep out of my grave, ſhe ſhall never ſet foot here again!"

"Good Heaven! has Mrs. Ellinger left her houſe?" exclaimed Roſella, much ſhocked.

"Aye, aye, ſhe's gone, and ſee what ſhe has left behind her!—Come when you would, you never ſaw a needle and thread in her hand, and a fine hand ſhe has made on't."

So ſaying, the old dame diſplayed an enormous bundle of ſhirts and houſehold linen in a moſt woeful tattered condition.

"I found all theſe," cried ſhe, "rotting in dirt, ſo I had 'em waſhed to ſee what I could make

make of 'em. She thought truly, nobody would pry into her doings till madam there, her crazy friend, came home; but she came home in a strait-waistcoat, which she ought to have had on when she ran away with that young fellow nineteen years ago!—I said she'd come to no good then; and there's that young slut she took too, she has got herself into fine bread, running after gentlefolk's husbands, and playing her pranks in Lord's families."

"Is it possible," exclaimed Rosella, "that I should thus have been represented!"

The talkative old housewife now raised her spectacles, to gaze at her more attentively.

"You, child!" cried she, dropping from her withered hand the scissars that hung to her apron-string, "why surely you an't—"

"My name is Montresor," interrupted Rosella, who repented that she had been betrayed to express any emotion.

"Aye, my good child, that's the name you go by;—and so you are come back! Well, well, we must all do the best we can however don't think I'm sorry.—I dare to say you can handle your needle; you look like a notable girl, so we shall agree very well, I'm sure—But are you come now for good, my dear? because I was forced to have all the blankets washed, and the beds took'd down.—Oh Lord! well it don't signify talking of it—it's well dirt don't poison; and as to the floors, I had e'm all well sluiced, and they've been all scrubbed every day since, by my own maid upon her marrow-bones, to make 'em come to their color. Betty's a girl that don't flinch at her work—but we've all our troubles.----I don't think this place agrees with her; she has got

the violenteſt cold and ſore throat, poor wench! I can't think what it is come to her!"

Roſella was far from being at a loſs to diſcover, but ſhe had no inclination to diſcuſs the point.

"Will you inform me where Mrs. Ellinger lives, madam?" aſked ſhe.

"Oh God knows!—But, child, be adviſed by your elders—it will be no credit to you to herd with her; and indeed I can't have any body in this houſe that chuſes to have any thing to ſay to her, or ſuch perſons as ſhe may be with."

"Is Miſs Ellinger with her mother?" reſumed Roſella.

"She! no indeed—Livy is a very clever girl, and has accompliſhed herſelf in all ſorts of drawing, and painting, and muſic, and fine works, and broidery, and ſuch like; and ſhe has got a place to be with the Lady Merrions, to tend upon 'em, and be their governeſs, I aſſure you!"

Roſella was much ſurpriſed at the whole of this intelligence of Miſs Livia's accompliſhments ſhe had ſeen proofs that perfectly ſatisfied her of what kind they were;—that Mr. Ellinger ſhould ſuffer his daughter to reſide under any roof in a menial capacity, which the old lady's expreſſion of *tending* ſeemed to indicate, ſhe much wondered at; and that the noble family into which ſhe had introduced herſelf, ſhould allow any attendant to be companion and inſtructor, or an inſtructor to perform the office of an attendant, excited ſtill greater aſtoniſhment; nor could ſhe forbear marvelling, when ſhe heard how delightfully the Lady Merrions were accommodated with an attendant and a governeſs in one and the ſame perſon—who the

the inculcator of morals, and the advocate of the Virtues and the Graces could be!—no doubt a diſtinct office from the other two, ſince Miſs Livia was ſo ill calculated to perform this third part.

"You cannot inform me then," ſaid Roſella, diſmiſſing her reflections, "where I can addreſs Mrs. Ellinger?"

"No, child, not I; but we ſhall know faſt enough, I ſuppoſe, when her quarterage is due ---ſhe won't forget to aſk for that in the midſt of her fine nonſenſe, about not being beholden to baſe people who think ſo much of their money; ſhe did not think of her huſband's money, as all her bill's can teſtify, an extravagant———"

Roſella, ſick of this invective, interrupted it, to deſire the good lady would preſent her reſpectful remembrance to Mr. Ellinger, and tell him ſhe had called to ſay ſhe reſided for the preſent with Mrs. Delaval, which ſhe hoped he would not diſapprove; and then, without waiting an anſwer, ſhe wiſhed the iraſcible dowager good morning, and haſtened out of the room.

As ſhe paſſed the office-door, Mr. Povey threw it open, exclaiming, with even more than his uſual pertneſs—

"Ha, little Montreſor! what, you are come to ſee the old one for a reinforcement of caſh, I ſuppoſe!—Upon my ſoul though, I was concerned to hear that the old maid ran on the wrong ſide of the poſt ſo confoundedly! why they ſay you was left on the road, without a guinea in your pocket!"

Roſella, with a look of anger and contempt puſhed by him; but he followed her up the paſſage, and as the chairmen were not in the way,

ſhe was obliged to hear a continuance of his impertinence.

" You ſee," cried he, " that I don't follow the example of my friend Eſtcourt;—upon my ſoul he is a fine fellow——what a curſed, hard-hearted Gipſey you muſt have been, to have daſhed him down that rock, and broke his bones in that manner!—You ſee I don't cut with old friends, becauſe they are not up to my trim!—Here I am you find!—D——n it if I can think how thoſe poor devils in the office can ſit tagging the twelve hours round, like ſo many pack-horſes."

Roſella, who had not forgotten the time when Captain Povey thought himſelf happy to be called down from his ſtool to attend her, could not forbear ſmiling, with an air not to be miſtaken, at the concluſion of this elegant ſpeech; he felt the ſilent ſatire, and determined to revenge it.

" I have been ſo hoaxed," reſumed he, " by a round of engagements to-day, that I almoſt forgot the ſcene I witneſſed as I was paſſing Bootle's. There was your old favorite, Arthur Oberne, arreſted this morning in the view of about fifty of us, who were lounging up and down the ſtreet. Curſe my ſpurs, if I ever ſaw a fellow fight more manfully!—but the dogs who entrapped him were up to his tricks—ſo a grim-looking ſcoundrel took him a cudgel ſtroke acroſs the head, that laid the ſcull open, by God!"

Roſella felt as if the place turned round with her; ſhe grew faint, and could ſcarcely ſupport herſelf by leaning againſt the wainſcot.

" Hollo! what!" exclaimed the unfeeling Povey, " why I thought—Oh ho! well, don't

don't droop—he is'nt done up yet!—Why an intimate friend of mine has taken five guineas to give an hundred if Clanallan ſees another ſhooting ſeaſon; ſo if his friends will ſpeculate upon his carcaſe to ſuch odds as that, you know, why any deep-one will bail Arthur on the ſame ſcore."

Roſella did not hear a word of this pretended conſolation; but afflicted at the misfortunes of the generous Oberne, and diſguſted by the impertinent eaſe with which the exulting Povey had treated a ſubject ſo diſtreſſing to her, ſhe left him with contempt, to ſeek for ſome one who would enquire whether the chairmen had betaken themſelves; but theſe gentlemen having finiſhed a political debate at the neareſt public-houſe, now thought proper to return, and receive her further commands; and Roſella eagerly ſeated herſelf, with juſt ſufficient preſence of mind to tell the men where to take her; whilſt Povey, doubly gratified by her diſtreſs, and the ſubject that had excited it, ſaw her depart with the malicious grin of an Arabian ſavage.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

A heroine's memoirs corroborated by grave teſtimony—A death-bed.

ROSELLA felt like a ſhipwrecked mariner reaching port, when ſhe found herſelf once more at the lodgings of Mrs. Delaval. She ran up ſtairs very eagerly, and was ſurpriſed to hear from Nancy, that the old gentleman, who had made ſo much of her the day before, was with the invalid now, and had been with her more than two hours; and that he had ſent for another queer, grave-looking gentleman, and they had been very buſy; and Miſtreſs had ſaid nobody was to interrupt her till they rung the bell.

She concluded that the girl meant Mr. Mordaunt by the old gentleman who had made ſo much of her the day before, but could not divine whom the ſecond could be. The confinement of Miſs Beauclerc, however, perpetually haunting her imagination, ſhe hoped the buſineſs in queſtion was ſome preliminary to her releaſe; and ſhe determined to wait with as much patience as ſhe could ſummon to her aid, till the ſignal for admittance allowed her the liberty of interrupting the congreſs. But in the interval the image of poor Oberne impriſoned, wounded,

wounded, and disgraced, every moment obtruded upon her recollection, till at length she lost every idea but that one which the malice of Povey had forced upon her, and she was awakened from her reverie by some one tapping her shoulder.

"Rosella," said Mr. Mordaunt, who had entered the room unperceived by her, "before you again see Mrs. Delaval, I must discover to you a circumstance which would too much agitate her to communicate.—Is your mind sufficiently disengaged to attend to me?"

Rosella assured him that she felt much interested in what he thus prepared her to hear.

"Your father," resumed Mr. Mordaunt, "some years back, that is, before you were born, was a young man of fortune who had been consigned to my guardianship; and I acted by him and his property in a manner my conscience has never reproached me with. But he was thoughtless and dissipated; and before he married your mother, which happened only three years after he was of age, he had parted with every guinea, and was encumbered with debts of honor to the amount of thousands. Under these circumstances, and others you will hear in future, he was privately united to a lady you are well acquainted with—you are not a stranger to your mother Rosella———"

"My mother!" exclaimed she with astonishment; "is my mother then alive?—Ah! Miss Beauclerc is really then my mother!---- How coldly, how ungenerously did I receive her caresses when she announced it to me!"

She then recounted to Mr. Mordaunt, in the bitterness of self-condemnation, her disbelief of the asseverations her mother had used to assure her

her of it, and that she had neglected to read some papers put into her hands for the purpose of proving the fact.

"Where are those papers?" asked he.

Rosella replied that they were in a box with her trinkets, which Mr. Bristock had taken from her.

"Taken from you!" repeated the man of law; "where did he take them from you?—why did you suffer it?"

She informed him of the effect the rough intrusion of Mr. Craufurd and his companion had had.

"But," added she, "I should not have had courage to have prevented Mr. Bristock's rapacity, had I not fainted; for I was too much hurt at his intelligence, and frightened by his threats, to have opposed him."

"Trinkets, you say! what may be the value of those trinkets?—are they worth any money?"

"Miss Beauclerc—my poor mother!" returned Rosella, sighing, "gave them all to me: there was her own picture set in a spring gold case, which cost twenty guineas; and a pair of bracelets of considerable value I believe, besides other things."

"Of the same kind, I suppose?" said Mr. Mordaunt.

Rosella replied in the affirmative; and recollecting the money, mentioned it to him.

"Well, my dear," resumed the old gentleman, with a look of exultation, "I hope your mother will soon be released; but I wish to caution you not to betray the secret I have revealed to you;—it is much better for her credit and your's, as she has managed, that your affinity should not be known. Mrs. Delaval her

aunt,

aunt, is you know, likewiſe your's, and ſhe is earneſt to conſider you as her niece in every reſpect, as your mother has already more money than ſhe can ſpend with prudence. So go now to the old lady, and take care of her; and to-morrow I will call again.—But tell me, my dear child," added Mr. Mordaunt, "if this ruffian ſeized all your little ſtock of money, how did you get to Dumfries?"

Roſella changed color more than once: the queſtion put her ſincerity to the teſt; for though ſhe might have ſaid, with truth, that ſhe had poſſeſſed enough for the purpoſe, yet ſhe was conſcious of the neceſſity of informing Mr. Mordaunt of the loan of Mr. Craufurd; and if he learned it at all, certainly the preſent moment was the beſt opportunity ſhe could have of introducing it. Yet to acknowledge that the interference of Mr. Oberne had obtained it, was betraying that ſhe had ſome correſpondence with him at leaſt, if he had not actually accompanied her in the journey.

"What is the matter, child?" ſaid Mr. Mordaunt, warmly; "you did not beg, or ſell your clothes, I hope?"

"No, certainly, Sir; but it ſo happened, that a gentleman—that Mr. Oberne———"

"A—a-hem!" ſounded in Mr. Mordaunt's throat; and Roſella, completely diſconcerted, coloured a deeper crimſon than before, and felt unable to proceed.

"Well, this gentleman—this Mr. Oberne, who *happened* to be travelling the ſame road, I ſuppoſe; what did he do to accommodate you?"

"He was ſo kind—that is, he was ſo obliging—I mean ſo polite, as to repreſent to Mr. Craufurd———"

"But pray," interrupted the good old man, "how did he *happen* to know the circumſtance? I never undertake to repreſent a caſe without being well acquainted with it; but perhaps an Iriſhman is not ſo ſcrupulous:"

Roſella was now plunged into freſh confuſion.

"Well, well," reſumed he, "you are arrived in England again, by ſtrange good fortune, and now we muſt retain you here; and I am not ſorry a motive of delicacy reſpecting your mother, made me heſitate on your firſt application to me, to claim you, but by the unſucceſsful letter Ellinger wrote at my requeſt."

Roſella was yet more pleaſed that it had ſo fallen out.

"So tell me," added Mr. Mordaunt, "the effect of this young gentleman's repreſentations?"

"Mr. Craufurd offered me what money I ſhould have occaſion for," returned Roſella, "and I ventured to take twenty-five pounds, which I reſigned to Mrs. Delaval at Dumfries; for I happened," ſhe heſitated at this word, for it did not pleaſe her, "to have in my purſe enough to take me there."

"Well, well, well! you are ſafely returned by ſtrange good fortune!" repeated he; "go to the poor old lady—ſhe wiſhes to ſee you."

He then left the room, and the houſe, much to the relief of Roſella, who had ſcarcely ever before rejoiced in his departure from her.

She ſaw, as ſhe approached Mrs. Delaval, that ſhe had been weeping: and when ſhe dropped on her knees to kiſs the kind hand extended to her, the good lady ſobbed and embraced her, without having the power of beſtowing

beſtowing the benediction her attitude ſeemed to ſolicit.

Several moments paſſed in ſilence; for the tears of Roſella flowed as faſt as thoſe of her newly diſcovered relation, who at length, with a deep ſigh, articulated—

"Poor Sophy!—Ah my dear child!" continued Mrs. Delaval, "I little thought, when ſhe wrote ſo kindly of you, and talked of your amiable diſpoſition, and your pretty perſon, that it was my own little niece ſhe was praiſing! —Indeed I muſt ſay, I think her father's will a hard one;—as things could not be altered, he ſhould not have dealt ſo by a poor innocent child as you was, who had never offended him!— But he was an odd-tempered man, as I uſed to tell my poor ſiſter.—Don't cry, however, my dear Roſella—I love you as much—more, I believe, than I love Sophy;—and as ſhe does not want my fortune, becauſe her own is much larger, I have done what I ought to do, and what I earneſtly wiſhed to do;—only before Mr. Mordaunt told me all, I was afraid Sophy might have thought ill of me for preferring any body to her; but ſhe can't take it amiſs of me, you know, for providing for her child, who has been ſo ill-treated amongſt them all, ſomehow or other!"

"Do not ſay ſo," returned Roſella, "I am happy now in your protection; and if Miſs Beauclerc—I mean my dear mother—were at liberty, I ſhould have nothing more to wiſh."

"You are a good girl," replied the old lady, "and was ſent by Providence to bring me here to die in peace, which I fear I could not have done at Dumfries. However, I have performed my promiſe to poor Mrs. Macdoual, ſo I hope her huſband will now be more kind to her;

her;—but as to saving any part of my income to send her, I shall not be able to do that, I fear, before I am called elsewhere."

Rosella was unwilling to notice the melancholy intimation with which the invalid had concluded; but eager to relieve her from any anxiety, she enquired if she should apply to Mr. Mordaunt to advance a sum for the purpose she mentioned.

"No, child," returned Mrs. Delaval; "what I could do, in justice to myself and others, I would do; but I cannot get in debt myself to relieve Macdoual—it is what I never have done, though I have often been thought ill of, I believe, by refusing."

Rosella secretly commending a firmness she had not expected to have found, from the easiness of temper Mrs. Delaval displayed, and the impositions which had been practised upon her, dropped the subject, and resumed another, which much more interested her.

"Did Mr. Mordaunt," asked she, "say if he had discovered the place to which my mother had been taken?"

Mrs. Delaval, with the usual apostrophe of "Poor Sophy!" replied that he had not entered into the particulars of what he was doing to release her; but he said he hoped they would meet soon.

"Heaven grant we may!" exclaimed Rosella; "Oh Madam! I long to entreat her pardon for the cruel coldness with which I received the communication she thought proper to make to me in Scotland."

The arrival of the physical tribe, whose visits had been remitted to this hour, by the business of the morning, at the particular request of their patient, prevented any further conversation

tion on a ſubject too diſtreſſing to be dwelt upon by Mrs. Delaval, without being ſenſibly felt.

The good lady exerciſed her rhetoric in vain, in endeavouring to induce Roſella to give up her poſt, of chief aſſiſtant, during the time employed, by the direction of the Phyſician, in embrocation; for it was a taſk ſhe would never delegate to another, leſs aſſiduous, or leſs tender perhaps than herſelf; but it was found neceſſary that the invalid ſhould have a nurſe to attend her in the night, and ſit up alternately with Nancy; and to this Roſella, however unwilling to be ſuperſeded in her office, could not object, as the good lady ſuffered with the utmoſt reluctance, any attention from her which interfered with her reſt.

But as ſhe diſcovered that the cataſtrophe Doctor D—— had ſo abruptly announced to her, became every hour more to be apprehended, ſhe would not again quit her, even at the requeſt of Mr. Mordaunt to renew her viſit to his ſiſter; for he had learned the unpleaſant iſſue of the firſt, though he had not been exactly told the accidental circumſtance of the narrative Lady Morteyne was at that moment giving, which rendered the *rencontre* ſo awkward to the whole party. The good man foreſaw the almoſt inſtant deceaſe of Mrs. Delaval; and as the mother of Roſella, under the predicament in which her imprudence had placed her, was the moſt improper perſon to be entruſted with the care of her conduct, he was anxious to ſecure her the good-will of Mrs. Methwald, to whoſe peculiarities he was not blind; that their reſidence in the ſame houſe, which he meditated, might be the leſs unpleaſant to each.

The

The death of Mrs. Delaval, which no care or attention could avert, was even more ſudden than Mr. Mordaunt had expected. The leaſt motion ſoon fatigued her almoſt beyond endurance: after the viſit of her ſurgeon from the ſixth day of his attendance, ſhe fell into a profound ſleep; and Roſella, having watched by her for ſome time, at length crept into the next room, of which the door was not ſhut, and to enjoy the freſhneſs of the air, placed herſelf by a window which had likewiſe been directed to be thrown up. She held a book in her hand, more that ſhe might not appear totally unemployed, than from any inclination to read; for in fact ſhe ſat immerſed in thought, with her eyes earneſtly fixed upon the pavement of the ſtreet, into which the apartment looked.

At length a figure, inſtead of paſſing on like others who had walked by without attracting her attention, or diſturbing her reverie, ſtood motionleſs immediately oppoſite to her, and Roſella inſtinctively regarding him, recognized Oberne!—She ſtarted—and haſtily waving her hand, he returned the motion with a ſtiff bow, and paſſed on; for he imagined ſhe had ſeen and diſregarded the ſalutation he had twice vainly made.

Roſella was hurt by his manner; ſhe looked after him, and obſerved that he likewiſe turned his head—his feet lingered a moment, and then carried him from her ſight. She had no time, however, for reflections upon a diſtance ſo unuſual in the manner of Oberne, for Nancy called loudly to her from the next room, and wholly occupied by terror, ſhe flew to obey the ſummons, and beheld the countenance of her good old friend dreadfully changed.

The

The nurſe cooly threw a handkerchief over it; and Roſella endeavouring to ſnatch it away, exclaimed—

"What are you doing—you will ſtifle her!"

"Let the poor lady reſt," returned the woman in a ſolemn whiſper, "ſhe is going off!"

"Oh good Heaven!" cried Roſella, in an agony, "call, ſend for ſomebody—ſend for Doctor D——!"

"It is all in vain, Miſs," ſaid the nurſe, "her time is come!"

Roſella inſiſted, however, that her demand ſhould be complied with, and the people of the houſe obeyed her. She diſpatched a meſſenger too, to Mr. Mordaunt; but the affirmation of the nurſe was juſt—in leſs than a quarter of an hour Mrs. Delaval expired, ſincerely mourned by her late-found, but affectionate niece, who wiſhed to have remained with the corpſe until it was interred; but Mr. Mordaunt would not indulge her in a requeſt, on many accounts improper;---he removed her immediately to his own houſe, and in the character of executor, made the uſual arrangements for the funeral of the deceaſed, whoſe days were ſhortened by the impolitic avarice of the wretch, into whoſe power ſhe had inconſiderately placed herſelf;---the Scotch broth of Macdoual's table had ſaved a few guineas for the time being, and probably deprived him of thouſands.

Mrs. Methwald received Roſella, not as a young perſon diſtreſſed by a painful recent occurrence, but as a young lady who had juſt ſucceeded to a conſiderable property, which would infallibly give her the conſequence ſhe would fain perhaps have withheld: ſhe treated her with aſſiduous reſpect, and overwhelmed her with thoſe cold attentions, which neither excite

excite gratitude, nor convey pleaſure. Roſella felt even the operations of her mind reſtrained in the preſence of Mrs. Methwald, and ſhe regretted each day the death of her good old aunt even more poignantly than at the moment it happened.

It was now thought neceſſary that ſhe ſhould have a female attendant; and with much entreaty, Nancy was ſuffered to officiate in the capacity of lady's-maid, notwithſtanding Mrs. Creſſy had aſked, with ſurpriſe and diſguſt, what awkward creature ſhe had met as ſhe paſſed into her mother's dreſſing-room.

Roſella ſoon began to be anxiouſly impatient for the performance of the promiſe Mr. Mordaunt daily renewed to her, that ſhe ſhould very ſhortly embrace her mother at Avelines; but it was accompanied with an injunction to have patience, which ſhe every hour found a great difficulty in complying with. He thought proper to ſtate to her the acceſſion of fortune ſhe had made by the teſtament of Mrs. Delaval; and Roſella learned, with ſurpriſe, that nearly twenty thouſand pounds had devolved entirely to her. Mrs. Macdoual was a legatee for the ſums Mrs. Delaval had at different times lent the huſband to purchaſe lands and tenaments, for which ſhe had contrived to retain acknowledgments to the amount of four thouſand pounds; the money was appointed to be paid into the hands of truſtees, for the ſole and ſeparate uſe of Mrs. Macdoual, and at her death to be equally divided amongſt her daughters. And Mr. Mordaunt told Roſella he had thus ſettled the plan, at once to gratify the wiſh of the teſtatrix to ſerve the woman, and at the ſame time to mortify Macdoual, who had conducted himſelf in a manner ſo ſcandalous.

At

At length Mr. Mordaunt announced to Roſella the intelligence ſhe ſo earneſtly longed to hear, that Miſs Beauclerc, as ſhe was ſtill called, was, by his exertions in her favor, once more quietly ſettled at Avelines.

"Thank Heaven!—And why, why," exclaimed Roſella, "may not I immediately fly to her?"

"My dear," replied the old gentleman, "I wiſh you to repreſs your emotions, and liſten to me."

Roſella was endeavoring to obey, when Mrs. Methwald, who was preſent, and ſeemed burſting with ſome *à-propos* apophthegm interrupted her brother to obſerve, that it was not a ſymptom of a proper education when young ladies ſuffered exclamations or ſtrong expreſſions to eſcape their lips; and that girls of faſhion, who were moſt remarkable for quiet manners, invariably adopted the moſt ſimple and delicate phraſes, and always rejected ſuch as marked any potent wiſh or volition.

Roſella, who had more than once marked the countenance of Mrs. Methwald impreſſed with impatience and diſguſt towards her, which, on reviewing her conduct, ſhe was at a loſs to account for, was now enlightened as to the many offences ſhe might have unwarily committed: but her mind was too much engroſſed at this moment by a more important ſubject, to dwell upon this one, longer than the querulous and peeviſh voice of the good lady compelled her, and ſhe turned to Mr. Mordaunt in ſilence, to hear what he meant to ſay.

"Your mother," reſumed he, "has acted in a manner which her ſobered judgment contemns:—I have been, I confeſs, uneaſy leſt, on her return to her home, ſhe might claim you

you openly as her child; as such an avowal cannot now be made with propriety."

Rosella appeared shocked.

"But," continued he, "her natural good sense, which is no longer clouded by idle fantasies, and her earnest wish to repair the inconveniences she has occasioned you to suffer, have induced her to make a considerable sacrifice to advance your interest and future welfare, I was unfortunately absent when my counsels might have been of some service to you—I mean, when the concealment of your birth and the marriage of your mother was acceded to, from the avariee of your grandfather, the romantic ideas of his daughter, and the absurdity of that woman, Mrs. Ellinger. However they succeeded, as they imagined, in imposing upon the world; and now to publish a key to their foolish mystery, and unravel it, would make more noise than a prudent and modest young woman would chuse to be the subject of; especially as their succeeding politics were still more lamentably arranged and conducted, and that the will of Mr. Beauclerc excludes you from any advantage a public discovery might have given you. You now appear a young orphan of a handsome independent fortune; and the accidents which have been a momentary disadvantage to you, will not be thought the result of your own imprudence, but that of your guardian's, who entrusted you to the guidance of a person deprived, for the moment, of the power of acting with propriety."

The motion of Mrs. Methwald's head now discovered that she eagerly desired to plant a wise sentence after this observation; but her brother averted it by proceeding rather more rapidly.

"This

" This is your mother's own remark; but if an inveſtigation of your birth takes place—if your affinity to *her* is made known, who in ſpite of the utmoſt precaution, and the greateſt activity in explaining the truth, will not eſcape the ſtigma which the moſt lamentable of human evils, an entire derangement of reaſon, affixes to a family—your future eſtabliſhment in life might be much injured, and the repentance of your mother rendered ſtill more bitter than it is. And therefore, my dear child, ſhe has conſented to your reſidence with Mrs. Methwald, which I am certain the good humour and good ſenſe of each party will render pleaſing to the other, until chance and your own merit preſent you the future partner of your life."

Roſella turned to Mrs. Methwald at the cloſe of this ſpeech, to thank her for her conſiderate and kind hoſpitality; but her words were arreſted in their progreſs by obſerving the countenance of the lady crimſoned over with agitation, and every nerve in a tremor. She had begun to diſcover what theſe ſignals meant, and became ſo embarraſſed that her intended compliment of acknowledgment faltered on her tongue, and Mrs. Methwald replied to it by a cold bow.

" May I be allowed to expreſs my wiſhes," ſaid Roſella, addreſſing herſelf to the honeſt and well-meaning maſter of the manſion, " to ſee my poor mother ſoon?"

" Yes, my dear child," returned he with a peculiar kindneſs of accent ſhe well underſtood, " you ſhall viſit her to-morrow, and I will accompany you."

" Oh how much I am indebted to you!" ſhe exclaimed; then recollecting that this energy might

might be a tranſgreſſion againſt decorum, ſhe checked herſelf, and repeated in a leſs animated tone, "Indeed, Sir, I am very much obliged to you!"

CHAP. XVII.

A recantation of error—A diſaſter productive of a rencontre.

THE next morning early, Mr. Mordaunt ordered the carriage, which he very ſeldom uſed himſelf, that he might perform his promiſe in eſcorting Roſella; and whilſt they were at the breakfaſt-table, old Philip entered to tell his Lady that Mrs. Creſſy was extremely ſorry ſhe could not let her have her chariot for the morning, as ſhe was engaged to go to the review; but ſhe would ſend round to her friends to endeavour to procure a carriage; and Mrs. Creſſy hoped her mother would have the goodneſs to excuſe the omiſſion of writing her anſwer, as ſhe was occupied in dreſſing.

Roſella looked diſtreſſed; and Mr. Mordaunt, coolly deſiring his ſiſter to inform Mrs. Creſſy that her application to her friends would not be neceſſary, immediately ordered a poſt-chaiſe.

The lady, who expected to have the pleaſure of being diſtreſſed to death for a carriage, whilſt that of her brother was employed in the ſervice of their young inmate, was diſconcerted by the new arrangement he had made, and her

her conſcience whiſpered a ſhort ſentence, which her pride however would not entirely ſubſcribe to.

When the breakfaſt was ended, Mr. Mordaunt enquired of Roſella if ſhe were ready for the excurſion; and ſhe ſtarted up with alacrity to attend him.

"Shall you," heſitated Mrs. Methwald, "do you mean perhaps you ſtay dinner at Hampton-wick—and if ſo, I will take mine with Mrs. Creſſy when ſhe returns from the review."

"Yes, yes," returned he, "we will ſettle it thus at every event!"

He then took the hand of Roſella, who curtſied her farewel compliment to the lady, and ſhe was led to the hack poſt-chaiſe he had ſent for, which his groom attended: but Mr. Mordaunt was not long in diſcovering that it was drawn by a moſt miſerable pair of horſes, one of them appearing inclined to gib, and the other, which the poſtboy rode, was ſo old, feeble, and ſtiff that it could ſcarcely be forced to move at any rate: and letting down one of the front glaſſes, he deſired to know why he had been ſo ill-uſed, and was informed by the driver that his maſter had let out every other horſe in his ſtable, and would not have ſent theſe had there been another pair to be had in London, but that every thing that could go at all, had been hired for the review.

"We had better not go on," ſaid Mr. Mordaunt, "I much doubt if theſe wretched animals can take us to Hampton-wick."

Roſella, who would rather have walked the whole way than have deferred the viſit, appeared however ſo unwilling to turn back, that he would

would not disappoint her hopes, and bade the lad to proceed.

They were a most tedious time upon the road; but at length, to the infinite joy of Rosella, they turned up the lane leading to Avelines, and her heart palpitated with a mixed emotion of pain and pleasure, as every well-known object met her eye. When the chaise reached the house, she looked up to the dressing-room windows, and catching a glimpse of her mother's figure, as she suddenly retreated from one of them, hastily ran up stairs, and in a few seconds found herself in her arms.

The person of Miss Beauclerc was emaciated, her countenance pale, and it was easy to discover that she had lost her hair. Rosella was shocked to agony.

"Oh my mother--my dear, dear mother!" exclaimed she, "what have you not suffered! -----And I, your incredulous and ungrateful child———"

"Say no more, my Rosella," returned she, sobbing; "if I have been unhappy, this moment enables me to forget it.---Oh that my follies, which have injured my daughter, might be as easily expunged from the remembrance of the unjust world, which will not separate my imprudence and her meritorious conduct!

"Oh madam! think no more of the past," returned Rosella, "but let the future find us happy in the society of each other! I will forego with delight those imaginary advantages Mr. Mordaunt speaks of, which militate against my first and most cherished duty---for I cannot give up my mother!"

"You are the generous, the amiable girl I thought you," cried the tender parent; "amidst the many chimeras I have absurdly indulged

indulged, that idea alone was not imaginary! Oh Roſella! I was awakened with horror to a ſenſe of the follies I had committed!—Let me not recal the moment in which I found myſelf forcibly detained from my unprotected girl; let me not reflect upon the remorſe that tore my ſoul, when the purſe I would have ſent her was ſnatched from me, and I was goaded each moment with a horrible review of the inſults to which my miſ-conduct had ſubjected her!"

"No, no, interrupted Roſella, eagerly, "it muſt all be buried in oblivion!"

"Let me recollect myſelf," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc, with an air of dread, "I muſt no longer ſuffer my emotions to govern me—I muſt watch over every ſtart of what is falſely called ſenſibility, and be thankful that the flights of imagination I have indulged, have not wholly undone me!"

Roſella, as if fearful of diſturbing the empire her mother ſought to gain over herſelf, kiſſed her hand in ſilence.

"My dear child," reſumed ſhe more calmly, "our worthy friend, Mr. Mordaunt, has informed me by whoſe interference you was reſcued from your regretted ſituation at Dunkeld.—Do not be apprehenſive that I am relapſing," ſhe added, with a ſedate ſmile; "I am no longer in the clouds, and though I ſtill think highly of my Roſella's attractions, I do not ſuppoſe that every unmarried man ſhe may meet, muſt of neceſſity have retained a diſengaged heart for her. But I acknowledge that I think the conduct of Mr. Oberne unuſually aſſiduous;—do not however let me miſlead you by romantic ſuppoſitions perhaps," continued ſhe, on obſerving a ſudden change in the countenance

countenance of Rosella; "I have only to hope that my dear child may be blessed with the regard of a good man, and that she may deserve his affection and confidence by a prudence and steadiness it has been my misfortune not to have possessed.—Mr. Mordaunt is all goodness—I would to heaven I had listened to his friendly remonstrances before I left London upon that fatal expedition, which, by its effects, has deprived me of the happiness of your society!"

"And why should you not indulge your wish and mine?" asked Rosella; "believe me, dearest madam, I would reject the consideration of what is called the world, if I must purchase it at the expence of a sacrifice so important as the fulfilment of a self-rewarding duty, and the smallest diminution of your contentment."

"Mr. Mordaunt knows my sentiments upon this painful subject," returned Miss Beauclerc; "and I must not discuss it with my Rosella. I shall at least have the consolation of reflecting that every pang I feel will be in the reparation of my errors."

Their mutual friend now interrupted the *tête-à-tête*, which he was unwilling to suffer of too great a length, and finding both mother and daughter more calm than he had expected, he congratulated them on a meeting so satisfactory; and to disengage the mind of Miss Beauclerc from dwelling too much upon unpleasant recollections, after enquiring her hour of dinner, which he intended, he said to partake of, he proposed a walk upon the lawn.

She then found leisure to enquire of Rosella the progress of her acquaintance with her aunt Delaval; and dropped some tears in return for the

the kindneſs and affection with which ſhe had ever been mentioned by her.

Miſs Beauclerc congratulated her with a tender ſmile upon the independence ſhe had acquired, which ſhe rejoiced in, ſhe ſaid, becauſe it would do much in procuring the favorable opinion of the world.

"But," added ſhe, "I cannot endure that your mother, with ſo ample a fortune, ſhould make no effort to render your's more reſpectable; and I muſt requeſt the aſſiſtance of our good friend to arrange my affairs, and preſerve for you at leaſt the large legacy I received in infancy from my uncle. You will find, Sir," addreſſing Mr. Mordaunt, "that I have been ſince the death of my father, ſhamefully extravagant; but I had rather bluſh in your preſence for an avowed error, than continue unjuſt to my child."

"Well, well," replied the good man, "we all know that houſes cannot be fitted up, and eſtates purchaſed for nothing: ſo at preſent we will ſay no more upon the ſubject."

Roſella was much pleaſed to be ſpared a diſcuſſion that wounded her feelings; and ſhe took advantage of a momentary abſence of her mother, to entreat that ſhe might not be ſuffered to deprive herſelf of any part of thoſe poſſeſſions ſhe herſelf ſo little wanted.

"What ſhe can ſpare," returned Mr. Mordaunt, "you are well entitled to; but ſhe ſhall not inconvenience herſelf."

At dinner, Roſella miſſed the old butler, whom ſhe had always been accuſtomed to ſee at the ſideboard; and when the cloth was removed, ſhe rather inconſiderately mentioned him.

'I am much indebted to poor Simpſon, I find," replied Miſs Beauclerc, "ſince he was

indirectly the means of reſtoring me to a proper mode of thinking—by a violent remedy indeed, but a very ſalutary one. Diſguſted with a ſervitude which had coſt him ſo dear, he returned to his native place; and there it happens that my ſelfiſh couſin lives, who had formerly ſeen Simpſon at my father's houſe, and his enquiries drew from the angry old man a recital of all the follies he had witneſſed, and others which had reached him after his ſeparation from me: Mr. Briſtock immediately made a further inquiſition into my conduct, and moſt probably thought himſelf well authorized to act as he did."

Mr. Mordaunt changed a ſubject ſo unpleaſant to the whole party; but Roſella, much ſhocked that ſhe had inadvertently introduced it, could not recover from her chagrin. The ſpirits of Miſs Beauclerc likewiſe drooped as the hour of ſeparation drew nigh. When ſhe roſe from table, ſhe led Roſella again to her dreſſing-room, and embracing her with tears ſhe could no longer reſtrain, gave her a key to the ſmall trunk which had been taken from her by Mr. Briſtock, and reſtored with other things, as he would not, by ſending it to Roſella, tacitly avow a charge that had been inſtituted againſt him.

"You muſt take this with you, my dear girl," ſaid Miſs Beauclerc; "and you will find in it a few baubles I have no further uſe for; it contains likewiſe, a picture of your unfortunate father," added ſhe, with a deep ſigh, "whom my romantic imprudence conducted to an early grave!"

"Oh do not, deareſt madam," ſaid Roſella, "do not render this meeting, which I have ardently

ardently longed for, so inexpressibly painful to me."

"I will not," replied Miss Beauclerc hastily, and wiping her eyes; "no, Rosella, my future study must be to improve your happiness—I have already given you sufficient pain. But I will have done—we will return to our good friend; let me entreat you however, my love, before we join him, not to betray too much emotion when you quit me, that I may, without appearing selfish, invite you to repeat this indulgence."

Rosella promised to govern herself, and they descended to the apartment where Mr. Mordaunt awaited them, who immediately asked for his coffee; and at seven o'clock he reminded Rosella that they had a few miles to travel, who recollecting the caution she had received, avowed herself ready to accompany him.

Miss Beauclerc would have had the little coffer, of which she had given her the key, put into the chaise; but Mr. Mordaunt, who imagined from its appearance that it contained valuables, would not, he said, be encumbered with baggage, but promised to send a servant for it the next morning; which he thought more safe than venturing it at so dangerous an hour as it must necessarily be before they reached his house.

Miss Beauclerc acquiesced; and accompanying her guests to the door, she presented her hand to her old friend, and embracing his young companion, suddenly withdrew: Rosella, as the chaise drove away, vainly looked up to the dressing-room for a parting glance, whilst Mr. Mordaunt pretended to admire the landscape from the window on his side; she so far reco-

vered herſelf, however, as to preſent him a countenance which had ſome pretenſions to cheerfulneſs, and in a few minutes converſed with calmneſs and coherency.

They had crept almoſt a foot pace for about two miles, when Mr. Mordaunt perceiving that it would be impoſſible to reach town till it was entirely dark, at the rate they travelled, called to the lad to puſh on; and he was informed in reply, that the poor beaſts would do very well when they got warm.

But this favourable event not appearing likely to happen ſoon, Roſella enquired if it would not be better to ſend back the groom, and borrow Miſs Beauclerc's horſes.

"She would not have ſuffered us to have left her houſe in this equipage," returned Mr. Mordaunt, "depend upon it, had not that ſordid villain, her couſin, inſtantly ſold her carriages and horſes when he took poſſeſſion of Avelines!"

Roſella was hurt at this intelligence almoſt to tears, but ſhe would not make any comment upon it.

The driver had taken them through Kingſton owing to ſome obſtruction in the other road, and with much laſhing, coaxing, and ſwearing, had reached the middle of Putney-heath when one of the animals refuſed to advance, and every eſſay to force it forward only increaſed the dark aſpect of affairs, by making it back the chaiſe into a hollow, where it overturned, in ſpite of the mutual efforts of the poſtillion and the ſervant who followed it.

Neither Mr. Mordaunt nor his companion were in the leaſt hurt, but, for the firſt time

in

in her life, Roſella heard an oath paſs his lips; for it was now very nearly dark, and the place by no means ſo ſafe as might have been wiſhed. He curſed the folly of the driver for bringing them that way, and as the lad made no reply, and inſtead of aſſiſting to diſengage the vicious beaſt from the carriage, ſtood muttering execrations on his part, he began to fear that there was more of deſign than accident in the circumſtance, eſpecially as in a few minutes after, he diſtinguiſhed the clattering of horſes' hoofs, which approached at full ſpeed.

"Will," cried he to the groom, "have you your piſtols?"

The man replied that he did not know of ſtaying ſo late, and he had not brought them.

"Pſha!" ejaculated his maſter, ſtill more out of temper: "I ſhall walk forward to the next houſe," reſumed he, taking the arm of Roſella, "when I reach it, you ſhall ride on, and bring me another chaiſe."

At this moment the horſemen, inſtead of paſſing, ſuddenly ſtopped; and Mr. Mordaunt fully expecting the uſual demand, was preparing to transfer his caſh without bond or obligation, when a voice more courteous, enquired if he wiſhed for aſſiſtance.

"I thank you, Sir," returned Mr. Mordaunt, "but I believe our moſt prudent plan will be what I mentioned."

"Is the chaiſe then damaged?" aſked the ſtranger.

"I don't think it is," ſaid the poſt-boy; "but I an't able to ſit my horſe; for that devil has almoſt jammed my leg with the pole."

"Why did you not before ſay that you was hurt?" exclaimed Mr. Mordaunt in a ſofter accent

accent than he had hitherto uſed; "if I had been aware of it, do you imagine I would have left you without aſſiſtance?"

The ſtranger, without any further preliminary, diſmounted, and with the joint efforts of his own ſervant and Will, raiſed the fallen chaiſe, whilſt Mr. Mordaunt held the ſaddle-horſes. Roſella, meantime, offered the boy ſome hungary-water to bathe his leg, which he thankfully accepted; and as ſhe conſidered herſelf to be the primary cauſe of his misfortune, ſhe put a guinea into his hand, a *largeſſe* that entirely conſoled him for it.

He was quite unable, however, to ride but upon the bar of the chaiſe, and Mr. Mordaunt not chuſing to enter it again, reſolved to walk forward as he had intended.

The ſtranger then bade him good night, and was mounting his horſe when Mr. Mordaunt, having again taken the arm of his young charge, exclaimed—

"You tremble, Roſella, are you ſtill frightened?—Be of good cheer—we ſhall ſoon reach a houſe."

"Roſella!" repeated the gentleman, walking again towards them, "is this Miſs Montreſor?"

Her conductor anſwered in the affirmative, for Roſella was dumb.

"But you, Sir," continued Mr. Mordaunt, "have no companion to announce you to us, either deſignedly or undeſignedly; and I being literally in the dark, and figuratively in the dark, ſhould feel a ſatisfaction in being enlightened a little!"

The gentleman had given his horſe to his ſervant, and was now walking by their ſide.

"Miſs

"Miſs Montreſor does not recollect my voice!" ſaid he, in a tone of enquiry.

"Yes," replied ſhe, in a heſitating accent, "I believe—I think I do!"

"Will you have the goodneſs to prove it," returned he, "by introducing me to this gentleman."

Roſella was ſilent.

"I beg your pardon, madam," he continued, "for my preſumption. You perceive, Sir," addreſſing Mr. Mordaunt, "that this lady is far from being anxious to proclaim a name, which ſhe may perhaps imagine will not make a very brilliant figure in the liſt of her aſſociates; and as that is the caſe, I have little reaſon to be forward in announcing myſelf to any of her friends."

"You are miſtaken, Mr. Oberne," cried ſhe.

"A—hem!" iſſued from the lungs of Mr. Mordaunt, and Roſella no longer knew what ſhe meant to have further ſaid.

The groom now pointed out a light at a ſmall diſtance, that ſeemed to proceed from a houſe by its being ſtationary; and thither they were glad to haſten for ſhelter from a heavy ſhower, which was faſt coming on; but to reach it, they were obliged to quit the road, and ſtumble over the inequalities of a trackleſs waſte. Roſella was ſtill led by Mr. Mordaunt, who being booted, did not obſerve the various hollows filled with water through which he draggad her; and as ſhe conſidered the motive from which he had taken this unpleaſant excurſion, ſhe thought that at leaſt ſhe ought to bear the inconvenience of it with patience and fortitude.

The

The rain now poured down in torrents, and they were yet a conſiderable diſtance from the light, when ſhe found herſelf walking apparently into a pond, and called to her conductor to ſtop; at the ſame moment Oberne, who was acquainted with the ſpot caught her up, and carried her through the water, which was only knee deep—a temerity which the elder gentleman very wiſely choſe not to hazard, but marched back again, and took a conſiderable circuit to rejoin his fair charge, who was ſcarcely landed when ſhe heard Mr. Mordaunt hallooing to her, and would have anſwered the call in perſon, but that Oberne would not ſuffer it; he urged her towards the ſhelter, which was nearer than he had ſuppoſed it, and with ſome difficulty they at length reached it.

A woman who was, ſhe ſaid, juſt going to bed, and indeed it was the light in the upper apartment of her little tenement that had attracted the wadderers, ſtepped down, and opened the door: but alas! there was no fire in the cottage, nor had ſhe any fuel but a bundle or two of ſticks her children had picked up on the heath, and they were too wet to light immediately, becauſe they had not been houſed in the ſtorm.

Oberne, who ſaw Roſella pale, fatigued, and forlorn, was inexpreſſibly uneaſy, and waited the arrival of Mr. Mordaunt with impatience, that they might hold a council of war, whether even when a chaiſe was procured, ſhe ought to venture into it with her wet garments; and ſhe was equally anxious for his arrival on his own account, for the ſtorm had increaſed to a hurricane of wind, accompanied by hail, rain, thunder, and tremendous flaſhes of lightning.

ning. Yet neither Mr. Mordaunt nor the men appeared, and she began to fear that he had unfortunately turned into a deeper part of the water, and that his calling had been the result of distress.

Shocked to agony by this supposition, she would have run out to seek him, had not Oberne prevented her by a superior exertion of strength.

"For Heaven's sake," exclaimed he, "pay some attention to yourself!—I will go in search of your friend, if you will promise to remain here."

"Run—fly then!" returned she; "he is drowned—I am sure he is!"

Oberne asserted that it was not possible; but he instantly left the cottage, and she heard his voice echo over the heath till the sound died away, and then her imagination was dreadfully busy in the most cruel conjectures.

The woman saw her extreme agitation, and asked if any of her company had strayed?—— Rosella informing her of the accident she apprehended, learned that there was no water, for a considerable way round, deep enough to drown any body; but to counteract this good intelligence, the dame said it was much more likely the poor gentleman was beset by rogues, and be like murdered. Her guest shuddered, and the woman then proceeded to state that a man had had his throat cut, not above a month back, within a quarter of a mile of the place; and was entering into every particular of the murder, but that Rosella entreated her to forbear.

"Not to be entirely idle, and in the hope perhaps of a reward, the considerate dame then undertook to make a fire with the wet wood;

and after having filled her cabin with a smoke so thick that it drove her fair inmate more than once into the storm to recover her breath, she at length succeeded in kindling a blaze; but Rosella could not feel cheered by it whilst Mr. Mordaunt and Oberne remained unsheltered, and in a state of alarm and distress that almost annihilated her faculties, she waited half an hour without intelligence of either.

A violent knocking at the door then awakened her expectation; but the woman of the house began to tremble and change color, from the recollection of the story she had been so cruelly prevented from dwelling upon in all its horrors, and she would not suffer Rosella to open it before she made circumstantial enquiries of the person without.

"Hav'nt you got a young lady here, mother Smith?" returned a hoarse voice.

"Lack-a-daisy, it's Jack Willis!" cried the dame, unbolting the entrance.

Rosella discovered the figure of Oberne immediately behind that of the man, and eagerly asked if Mr. Mordaunt were safe?

"Perfectly so," he replied; "he missed this cottage, and was admitted into another, where he has been much alarmed—You wear mourning!" exclaimed he, interrupting himself, "I hope you have not lost a very dear friend?"

"It is for poor Mrs. Delaval that I mourn," returned Rosella; "but tell me, am I to seek out Mr. Mordaunt, or will he join me here?"

"The man is gone to conduct him hither," replied Oberne.

Rosella then resumed her seat, and the woman ran out for her last bundle of wood.

As Oberne leant againſt the dark chimney-ſide, ſhe thought, as the light gleamed upon his face, that he was much altered; and the intelligence of Povey ſuddenly recurring to her, ſhe enquired, in an accent of kindneſs, if he had been indiſpoſed ſince ſhe had laſt the pleaſure of ſeeing him.

"The *pleaſure* of ſeeing me!" repeated he abruptly; "you had likewiſe the pleaſure of ſeeing me ſolicit your notice for ten minutes, in vain: yet this was not according to the tenor of our compact at Dumbarton."

Roſella remembered that this compact alluded to his expected change of circumſtances.

"Indeed," ſaid ſhe earneſtly, "you miſtake, and do me injuſtice in ſuppoſing that I could have been guilty of ſuch rudeneſs to any one, much leſs could I have voluntarily lowered myſelf in the opinion of Mr. Oberne, to whom I acknowledge that I am indebted for many polite and humane attentions, at a moment I much required them."

"Then we are ſtill good friends?" aſked he, taking a chair by her ſide.

"Yes, I hope ſo."

"Well then, my amiable Roſella, I will tell you all that has happened to me ſince I ſaw you."

The woman now entered with the fuel; but, diſregarding her preſence he continued——

"I was called to London upon buſineſs, which I will not trouble you to liſten to; but I muſt mention that it was of a nature to ſtrip me by a litigation of all that my improvidence had left. A man, cloſely allied to me by conſanguinity, offered to take my affairs into his hands, if I would transfer for a proper conſi-

deration,

deration, my right in the disputed estate to him. But this I refused, merely perhaps, because it was urged too warmly; and the person, offended by my obstinacy, endeavored to force my compliance by distressing me through the means of an agent, who was instructed to lend me money to defend the litigation, and then arrest me for it."—Rosella shuddered.—" I see you are acquainted with the circumstance," resumed Oberne; " indeed it was too public for a possibility of concealment, yet I imagined it might not have reached your ear.—You know then, that by an extreme resemblance between Lord Clanallan and myself, the very people he had employed to disgrace a brother, mistakenly forced him into confinement, and treated him with considerable personal violence, which acting upon the most irritable temper, has nearly destroyed a health already undermined by dissipation. I discovered the collusion to betray me; but at the earnest request of Lord Clanallan, I forbore to punish the perfidy of his agent, and rode this morning to a small place he has taken on Norebeton Common to avoid his associates, that I might see him, as he expressed himself, before he dies; but I believe his dejection operates to make him fear that his dissolution is much nearer than I apprehend it to be."

" It was not you then, said Rosella, " who was hurt in St. James's-street?"

" Did you hear that it was me?" asked Oberne.

" Yes, I heard it with extreme regret."

" If so," cried he, " I am almost sorry that I must relinquish my claim to so kind and generous a concern."

" I will promise to renew it then," said Rosella, with more apparent gaiety than she really

really felt, " the next misadventure in which I may chance to hear you are engaged."

" You are obligingly provident," returned he; " but I must entreat that you will not throw away all your compassion upon a broken head or a broken fortune, since there is another still more serious evil as likely to overtake me as either."

She looked for an explanation.

" Oh madam!" continued he, assuming an air of levity, " can it be difficult to discover that I mean a broken heart?"—Rosella smiled, " To be more serious—I have felt a strange *vacuum* in my bosom since I quitted you—I have been most unaccountably inclined to melancholy and contemplation—I have experienced a mortal abhorrence of the thoughtless extravagance which has injured my fortune—and I have a thousand times wished to ask you, if you could condescend to live——"

Where, or in what manner, Rosella could not hear, for the return of Mr. Mordaunt interrupted what she conceived to be the most interesting epoch of the interview.

" My dear child," exclaimed he, " I am glad to find you so comfortably situated.—I expect William every moment with a chaise, and I hope you will not remain long enough in your dripping garments to catch a fever; but we must both expect a cold and sore-throat at least."

" God forbid!" cried Oberne; " situated as I have been these ten minutes last," he added with his usual openness, " I had forgotten the necessity of a removal; but with such a dread as you have now inspired, I must regret the charming *tête-à-tête* Fortune has obliged me with."

" Dame,"

" Dame," ſaid Mr. Mordaunt to the good woman, who did not underſtand the compliment implied to her in the latter part of Oberne's ſpeech, " I ſuppoſe, as it is paſt your bed-time, you have been ſleeping in your chair."

" No, pleaſe your Honor," returned ſhe ſimpering, " I han't been ſleeping, only I thought the young gentleman and the young lady ſeemed to have ſo much to ſay to each other, that I fancied my cackle would be troubleſome."

Roſella now turned from the candle, which was ſtaring in the ſocket, that her crimſoned cheek might not be diſcerned, eſpecially when the well-remembered " A-hem" ſaluted her ear; and ſhe was not diſpleaſed when the ſound of a carriage ſtopping near the door of the cottage, promiſed to relieve her from an embarraſſment that grew inſupportable, from the ſilence that ſucceeded the woman's notable ſpeech; for Oberne, recollecting the unreſerved communication he had made in her preſence, to which it appeared ſhe had not been ſo inattentive as he had imagined, was himſelf rather diſconcerted.

The groom opened the door to announce the chaiſe; and Mr. Mordaunt looking out, obſerved that the rain was ſtill more violent than it had yet been, and it occurred to him that humanity muſt oblige him to offer Oberne a place in the carriage; a propoſition he very eagerly accepted.

The diſaſters of the evening appeared now to be overcome; and the good woman, who had proved herſelf to be ſo patient a liſtener to an imaginary *tête-à-tête*, found reaſon to congratulate

gratulate herſelf that her repoſe had been ſo fortunately, for her at leaſt, diſturbed.

The firſt mile or two was paſſed in ſilence; and Mr. Mordaunt then awakening from a reverie, addreſſed himſelf to Oborne—

"Miſs Montreſor has informed me," ſaid he, "that I, with her other friends, have acknowledgments to return you, Sir, for your conſiderate aſſiſtance when ſhe found herſelf in a very unpleaſant ſituation; and it gives me ſenſible pleaſure that I have thus met with an opportunity of offering them, at a moment when I have witneſſed your diſintereſted humanity in behalf of people to whom you ſuppoſed yourſelf a ſtranger."

Oberne returned a polite anſwer; but Roſella ſilently remarked that it was devoid of that vivacity which generally characterized his replies.

As they entered Piccadilly, Mr. Mordaunt enquired where he would wiſh to be ſet down; and as Oberne did not chuſe to detain Roſella a moment longer than would be found neceſſary in the uncomfortable chilled ſtate ſhe muſt neceſſarily be, he begged the chaiſe might ſtop at a coach-ſtand.

"But will Miſs Montreſor allow me," continued he, taking her hand, "to enquire to-morrow, how ſhe has endured this unmerciful ſoaking?"

Roſella heſitated; for the fidgets and apophthegms of Mrs. Methwald ruſhed to her memory, and ſhe would perhaps have declined ſeeing him in ſpite of her inclination to the contrary, had not Mr. Mordaunt replied to the requeſt by giving him a card of addreſs, and ſaying, that young ladies of the preſent day were

were not much to be found at home; but if Mr. Oberne would take the trouble to enquire for him, he ſhould be happy to ſee him at one o'clock.

Oberne, however diſappointed, took the hint, and accepted the appointment; and the chaiſe then ſtopping to let him out, he preſſed the hand of Roſella, which he ſtill held, bade her good night, and repeating the compliment to Mr. Mordaunt, they ſeparated.

"It was fortunate, my dear," obſerved the old gentleman, "that this good-humored fellow, this Oberne *happened* to be on the road."

Roſella, imagining from this intimation that he ſuppoſed Oberne had not been unacquainted with the expedition, was hurt that he ſhould entertain ſuch an idea.

"He told me," replied ſhe, "that he was returning from a viſit to Lord Clanallan."

"I never heard," ſaid Mr. Mordaunt, "that his brother had any ſeat on this road; but it is of very little conſequence to the world where he plants himſelf: for I believe he is a moſt worthleſs fellow, and I have been informed that he has uſed this young man very ill."

Roſella was ſilent; nor did her companion renew the converſation before they reached home.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Maiden perſeverance—and an unfaſhionable young woman of faſhion.

MRS. METHWALD was not yet returned from her dinner viſit; and Roſella, delighted to eſcape her faſtidious and formal converſation, retired immediately to her chamber, having received an injunction from Mr. Mordaunt to take care of herſelf; an attention he ſeconded by ſending Mrs. Methwald's maid to ſee that every precaution was uſed to prevent her from catching cold.

The firſt thing Roſella diſcovered, on entering her apartment, was a letter on the dreſſing-table, which ſhe was informed, had been placed there, in the morning, by the lady of the houſe.

She

She ſeized it with a curious hand, and on breaking the ſeal, diſcerned the writing of Mrs. Methwald, who took this method of informing her, amidſt innumerable profeſſions of friendſhip, and many very wiſe and pretty ſentences, that ſhe could not poſſibly think of offering her the houſe where ſhe preſided, as a permanent aſylum, as circumſtances might ariſe to make her own ſtay there uncertain; then followed many other reaſons why the thing could not be thought of, the moſt forcible of which was, that two people who would fly voluntarily, and with impatience, to enjoy the ſociety of each other ten months out of the twelve, would travel to the extremities of the globe rather than be compelled to endure each other for ſix.

"As the lady has been married," thought Roſella, "ſhe ſpeaks from experience, I ſuppoſe."

"You will think this," continued Mrs. Methwald's letter, "a very frightful picture of human nature; but I fear it is a juſt one."

"It is a juſt picture of a ſpoiled child," repeated Roſella internally, "and it may be a juſt picture of the temper of a childiſh, capricious woman; but that it is a juſt picture of human nature, and may be indiſcriminately applied, is I hope, only the error of a writer of ſentences, who to turn a phraſe ſmartly, would in matters of opinion, almoſt turn Mahometan."

The concluſion of this letter, which Nancy did not ſuffer her to read without many remonſtrances, ſoftened extremely however; for it entreated that Roſella would conſider herſelf as a welcome viſiter in the houſe, where her brother would always be glad to ſee her, and hoped

hoped that her visits would be long and frequent; but Mrs. Methwald further added, that she would promise, in order that both Miss Montresor and herself might feel more at liberty and independent of each other, that when she was engaged to families of such rank and distinction that her young inmate, from not being used to such society, might feel uncomfortable in it, she would, with the familiarity of friendship, leave her at home.

"I am obliged to you, madam!" ejaculated Rosella, as her memory presented her with the contents of this epistle, whilst she reposed her head on the pillow; "it is certainly a most considerate precaution, to spare those blushes my rusticity might otherwise occasion you and myself."

As she reflected upon this very prudent letter, she felt puzzled how to act. Mrs. Methwald had tacitly allowed her to accept the hospitable proposition of her brother, without urging any objection; and now, in a manner that appeared to forbid an open discussion, she put a *veto* upon it!

"What," thought she, "ought to be the extent of my visits?—What am I to understand by the indefinite terms, long and frequent? A month is certainly a long visit; but if I am urgent to quit the house at the end of that period, what caprice and ingratitude may not Mr. Mordaunt accuse me of?"

Vexed and uncertain of what she ought to do—with the subject of Oberne's expected conference with her old friend intervening every moment to perplex her still more, she at length sunk to rest, after having resolved to acquaint

acquaint Mr. Ellinger with her dilemma, who would ſhe imagined, hint it to Mr. Mordaunt, or aſſiſt her in deciding what it would be moſt proper to do. To her mother ſhe would not complain or appeal, from the fear of diſturbing her quiet, or transfering an anxiety to her boſom, ſhe rather choſe to endure wholly herſelf.

The next morning ſhe roſe with a cold and ſlight cough, but not of ſufficient importance to retain her in the houſe, and ſhe found that Mr Mordaunt had eſcaped wonderfully—a circumſtance that conſoled her for the unpleaſant ſenſation ſhe experienced when ſhe was left alone with Mrs. Methwald after breakfaſt; but the good lady found out ſo many ſubjects to expatiate upon in ſucceſſion, that Roſella had as little opportunity as inclination to advert to the letter. Indeed ſhe began, when the clock had ſtruck twelve, to attend more to the opening of the ſtreet-door than to the converſation of her companion; and as the moment of appointment approached, her abſence and anxiety increaſed. A carriage at length ſtopped before the houſe, but no rap followed.

"I am going to make purchaſes this morning," ſaid Mrs. Methwald, "and ſhould be glad of your company."

Roſella bowed; ſhe did not venture to excuſe herſelf, leſt the lady, on learning the viſit of Oberne, ſhould ſuppoſe her refuſal originated in indecorous motives; ſhe forgot however, to put on her cloak and gloves, and Mrs. Methwald was obliged to wait whilſt ſhe equipped herſelf—a ſituation, ſhe afterwards ſaid, Mrs. Creſſy had never placed her in, to the day of her marriage.

When

When they had driven about for nearly two hours, the buſineſs of this ſententious perſonage had exhauſted itſelf, and ſhe condeſcended to aſk Roſella if ſhe wiſhed to call any where in the neighbourhood, before ſhe returned home.

" But I recollect," added Mrs. Methwald, " that my brother told me you had not ſeen Mr. Ellinger ſince your journey; and as I believe it would be right that you ſhould not fail in attention to him, the carriage ſhall take you to Chancery-lane, whilſt I call in upon a friend in Brook-ſtreet; but you will have the goodneſs not to detain me too long.—I am ſorry I cannot accompany you to the houſe of your guardian; for really the manners and aſſociates of his family are ſo different from mine, that I——"

" To me, madam," ſaid Roſella gravely, " no apology can ſurely be neceſſary.—I am much obliged to you for the opportunity you ſo conſiderately offer me, of obeying any intimation Mr. Mordaunt condeſcends to give me."

When ſhe had ſet down her unpleaſant companion in Brook-ſtreet, Roſella once more bent her way to the reſidence of Mr. Ellinger, who was now at home, and received her with much civility.

When the uſual ſalutations were paſt, he made a grievous complaint of the ſcandalous imprudence of his wife, and congratulated his ward upon her acquiſition of fortune.

" Mr. Povey," added he, " was here yeſterday, to make propoſals to you; and I think, child, conſidering all things, you ought to ſnap at them;—a prudent match juſt now would

would set every thing right again. So I advised him to apply to your good friend Mordaunt, and told him I would give him all my interest; and he promised, if no engagement interfered, that he would call upon him as soon as he was up to-day; but I dare say that will not be till twelve or one, for he is an idle dog when there is any business in hand."

Rosella had hitherto sat in silent surprise at this intelligence; but when Mr. Ellinger mentioned twelve or one o'clock, she started up in an emotion not to be repressed, and declared her abhorrence of a man who could treat her with such insult and impertinence as she had experienced from Mr. Povey,

The dowager Mrs. Ellinger at this moment entered the room, rubbing the flour and paste from her hands with a handkerchief that bore the marks of rappee.

"Bless me, my dear," exclaimed she, "why you seem in tip-top spirits!—Aye, miss, such good offers don't happen to every body;—what though you've got your pocket full of money, let me tell you a good husband that will take care of it, is not to be had every day in the week."

"If you mean Mr. Povey," replied Rosella, with considerable impatience in her accent and manner, "which I suppose from what Mr. Ellinger has said, I shall never give him that trouble, madam."

The old woman raised her hands and her handkerchief in surprise.

"A-hey-day!" exclaimed she, "what maggot's in the wind now!"

Rosella, rather ashamed of her warmth, contemplated a retreat; and turning to Mr. Ellinger,

Ellinger, told him that she would take another opportunity of speaking to him upon an affair, concerning which she wished to take his advice.

"Stay, child, stay," replied he, "what is your haste?—Take my advice now, and don't turn up your nose at what I have proposed:—let me tell you that Povey will be pretty well off, marry or not marry; for his uncle is a snug old fellow, and has no other heir than him."

"Mrs. Methwald will, I fear, be displeased," interrupted Rosella, "if I detain the carriage any further."

"Well then send it away, and dine with us," cried the old lady, "and we will send for Povey, and settle matters this blessed day.—Come, come, I see you only want a little begging and praying."

"Mr. Povey's character," said Rosella firmly, "appears to me in a light so unfavorable, that no persuasion should induce me to receive his addresses; which I am convinced he would never have made to me, had he not learned the legacy of my poor friend Mrs. Delaval."

"Aye, child," returned Mr. Ellinger, "I wanted to talk to you about that.—Mr. Mordaunt can now take you into his own house, now you have got twenty thousand pounds to your fortune---when you had not two, you could be suffered to live with me;---and as to the objection of my wife being away, that's all nothing: though to be sure I expected our friend, the good lady at Avelines, would have interfered and adjusted matters a little, as there was always such an affection between them.---Here have I paid three hundred pounds, all bills

bills which Mrs. Ellinger contracted without my knowledge! And it is, she must needs confess, be very hard upon me that I should be saddled with the whole, when Mrs. Ellinger was always spared to attend upon Miss Beauclerc whenever she was wanted, and was never backward, I must say for her, to execute any commission that was given her;---and this, my dear, I hope you will represent to the good lady.---But I was saying, as to the objection of your being here ---why, if Miss Beauclerc desires it, I will take Mrs. Ellinger home——"

"Take her home!" repeated the dowager; "and would you be such a fool, after what I have told you over and over, that you would be poisoned with dirt, and sent to a jail?---But I see how it is; I'll pack up my alls, and leave you to your trolloping fine lady!---The house don't hold her and me, mind that, Sam---I don't stay neither, to be the slave, and snubbed by a dwadle that can't make an apple-dumpling!---No, no---but so it is with you all---the poor mother's sent a trudging, and the wife's lady-paramount all the world over!---Such a wife as your's indeed, with her milliner's bills, and all her scores unpaid!"

Rosella, shocked, frightened, and disgusted, repeated that Mrs. Methwald would be distressed for the carriage; and in the confusion of accusation and recriminating violence that ensued, made her escape, and was half a mile from the house before either party recollected themselves.

The time had, however, appeared longer than it was in reality; Mrs. Methwald was not ready to return home, and the lady of the house sent to beg Miss Montresor would walk up stairs.

Rosella

Roſella was uſhered into a drawing-room, where an elderly, formal-looking, very plain gentlewoman juſt peeped in, and making a half-curtſey, returned to an adjoining apartment, to continue a confidential communication to her dear friend Mrs. Methwald. But it happened that, as ſhe was rather deaf, her companion was compelled to raiſe her voice to be heard; and the lady herſelf uſually ſpoke in a loud key, that ſhe might diſtinguiſh her own accents; ſo that Roſella, without any intention of liſtening, could hear the principal part of the converſation.

"My dear Madam," ſaid the miſtreſs of the manſion, "I know not how I can expreſs my gratitude for the kind concern you take in my welfare—I fear you will be tired of my detail."

"By no means," returned Mrs. Methwald, raiſing her voice much above its uſual querulous pitch; "I beg I may be informed of the whole, ſince you do me the honor to think me worthy of your confidence."

"My *dear* Ma'am!" exclaimed the other; "well, I believe I was telling you of the cruel ſlights I have received ſince his return to town. I no ſooner heard of the ſelfiſh machinations of his brother, than I begged to ſpeak with the faithleſs Oberne; for I ſtill regard him as my betrothed huſband, in ſpite of his deſertion, as I conceive that I am not warranted in breaking through my engagements becauſe he is regardleſs of his."

"Ah Madam," ſcreamed Mrs. Methwald, "your principles are ſo exemplary!"

"*Dear* Ma'am!—well, but I wrote, I entreated, I expoſtulated in vain:—he had the

heart to ſend me in anſwer, that he thought the moſt injurious part of his brother's conduct was that which had entangled him in the ſlighteſt ſemblance of attachment or engagement, where I well knew neither the one nor the other exiſted.—This, Madam, was cruel, and you might have ſuppoſed deciſive; but no difficulty could impede my efforts to act with the utmoſt propriety and honor!—I told him he had tacitly plighted me his faith, though not at the altar; but I conſidered him equally my own, and that I was firmly his, and his I would continue to be.—The barbarian! what an anſwer did he ſend me!—His affections were engaged to a moſt amiable and lovely young woman, he ſaid, at whoſe feet he meant to lay himſelf and his fortunes, broken as they were; nor ſhould the abſurd plans and iniquitous ſchemes of Lord Clanallan prevent his happineſs, if no more potent obſtacle intervened."

"Horrible!" exclaimed Mrs. Methwald.

"Admirable!" ſoliloquized Roſella; for ſhe hoped that ſhe was the object thus cheriſhed. "This then," thought ſhe, "is the woman whom he mentioned to me—it is ſingular enough that chance ſhould have conducted me to her houſe!

"But, Madam," continued the deaf *enamorata*, "I hear that his brother is at the point of death; and I think I may entertain reaſonable hopes that my infidel, when he has the honor of his title and family to maintain, will give up any imprudent plan he may have formed, and return to his allegiance and to happineſs.—I hear too, that the creature who has faſcinated him, is a little adventurer, whom he met with at——"

At

At this moment a violent rapping at the ſtreet-door prevented Roſella from diſtinguiſhing what this ſlighted but pertinacious dulcinea further ſaid. A ſervant threw open the door of the apartment where ſhe ſat, and was going to announce a lady who immediately followed him, but ſtopped on obſerving that the drawing-room was only occupied by Roſella.

"If my aunt is engaged," ſaid the new viſitant, "inform her that I am not in haſte."

Roſella, at the firſt glance, recognized Lady Lucy Eſtcourt; but as ſhe was doubtful in what light ſhe ſhould herſelf be beheld, ſhe merely bowed in ſilence, in return for her ſalutation.

"I believe I have the pleaſure of ſeeing Miſs Montreſor," ſaid the amiable young woman, extending her hand to Roſella with unaffected complacency; "and I cannot forget that I have her pardon to entreat for a very impertinent commiſſion with which I entruſted Mr. Delamere at Guairdy.—Believe me, Madam," continued ſhe, "when our good old friend Mr. Mordaunt undeceived me, and I diſcovered the error I had adopted, however mortified I could not fail to be at my own officiouſneſs and want of diſcernment, I experienced a ſatisfaction and pleaſure, which your forgiveneſs will completely ratify; and if I did not fear that you would add to my liſt of offences, an effort to make my peace by adulation, I ſhould venture to predict, from the amiable character of your countenance, that I need not deſpair."

"And I too ſhould fear," replied Roſella, preſſing the hand ſhe held, "that if your Ladyſhip could tranſlate the ſentiments that now

contend for utterance, I ſhould be accuſed of an admiration almoſt enthuſiaſtic!"

"Oh you flatterer!" exclaimed Lady Lucy; "however I accept your compliment; and now you cannot refuſe me your friendſhip without retracting."

Roſella eagerly declared that ſhe conſidered this overture as the moſt delightful favour Fortune could beſtow upon her: and whilſt Lady Lucy waited the appearance of her aunt, they entered into a converſation confidential, in ſome degree, on either ſide; for though they had hitherto ſo little met, they experienced a reciprocal ſentiment of good-will, that diſtanced the forms of a recent or ſlight acquaintance.

"Mr. Delamere informed me," ſaid Lady Lucy, "that you much intereſted yourſelf for an unhappy young man whom chance threw in your way in the North. Perhaps you have not heard his fate?"

Roſella replied that ſhe had not.

"He could not be prevailed upon to withdraw from the purſuit inſtituted againſt him," reſumed Lady Lucy, "when he learned the deſtiny of his unfortunate family; but he could not endure the miſery of his reflections, when in his confinement he had nothing to divert his mind from them even a moment, and he ended his life by his own hand!"

Roſella ſhuddered.

"Poor Mompeſſon!" exclaimed ſhe.

"His ſiſters," added the fair informant, "have not, I believe, recovered their reaſon; nor do I think the circumſtance at all to be deſired!"

Roſella gave her concurrent opinion, and a ſilence of a few ſeconds enſued, which Lady Lucy at length interrupted.

"My

"My good aunt," said she, smiling, "is engaged, I understand, with her confidante Mrs. Methwald; and I hope my dear Miss Montresor will excuse the inattention of a poor, deserted, love-sick lady, especially as she is herself the cause of the misfortune, I believe!"

"Me, Ma'am!" said Rosella with a deep blush.

"I am apprehensive that you will think me impertinent, a second time," resumed the other, taking her hand, and speaking in a lower voice; "yet I must inform you how the affair stands, for fear you should fancy a certain gentleman in fault in this very dark business.—My aunt Venables, who has certainly, poor lady, been rather unfortunate in her attachments, fixed upon Oberne two winters back, as her adorer for the season; and as he had then spent his younger brother's portion, and meant, like Orlando, to "go seek his fortunes," Lord Clanallan endeavoured to make him improve upon the favourable opinion of the lady; but the youth was stubborn, and with much difficulty was entrapped into one solitary visit, which was however, construed by my good aunt into a declaration. I would not," added Lady Lucy, "have hazarded your censure by this explanation, which most probably, you think it does not become me to give; only that I fear, from the long conference in the dressing-room, you may be induced to believe a different story by and by.

Rosella imagined she ought to disclaim all interest in the conduct of Oberne; but her faltering tongue and blushing cheek contradicted her words, and Lady Lucy laughed at the protest.

"To

" To ſet you an example of ſincerity," ſaid ſhe, " I will confeſs to you that the buſineſs which brings me to town to-day, is a compliment I think it right to pay my poor aunt, by informing her in perſon of a change of name that will ſoon take place in the family; but to ſay the truth, my confidence will not have the merit of being of long ſtanding, as I could not have concealed the circumſtance from you three days hence."

Encouraged by this good-humoured unreſerve, Roſella mentioned Mr. Delamere, and enquired if ſhe had gueſſed right. Lady Lucy replied in the affirmative, and received the ſincere congratulations of her new friend, who felt concerned that the entrance of Miſs Venables and Mrs. Methwald now interrupted the *tête-à-tête*.

Her *chaperon* coldly pronounced her name, and the lady of the manſion bowed in a ſupercilious manner, and thus paſſed the introduction.

As Mrs. Methwald marched gravely down ſtairs when ſhe had taken her leave, Lady Lucy ſtopped Roſella in the anti-room, and ſaid in a whiſper—

" It is all over with you—you are diſcovered to be the thief!—if you ſhould ſurvive your repentance, I will hope to have the real pleaſure of receiving you as my firſt viſitor when I have an eſtabliſhment of my own."

Roſella, highly gratified, returned a look of delighted aſſent, and followed Mrs. Methwald, who, in a fit of ſpleen, to which ſhe was rather ſubject, had popped into her carriage, and left her gueſt to follow at leiſure—a flight which, in her preſent happy temper of mind, was entirely unheeded.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Incertitude—a husband's sketch of a decorous wife.

IT was four o'clock when they reached home; and Rosella, spite of the satisfaction the offered friendship of Lady Lucy afforded her, could not avoid reflecting with agitation, that Oberne had had the expected conference with Mr. Mordaunt, whose prudence had perhaps annihilated his hopes: she recollected likewise, with vexation, the presumption of Povey; and longed, yet dreaded, to meet the countenance of her old friend.

Her expectations of a private conference with him, however, were completely crushed, when she learned that Mr. and Mrs. Cressy dined with the family, besides a gentleman or two. But a sudden idea struck her, that one of the other visitants, thus characterised by Nancy as a gentleman or two, might possibly be Oberne; and she hastily dressed herself, that she might be first in the drawing-room. Yet the lady of the house had already preceded her, because Mrs. Cressy was arrived; and Rosella endeavouring to restrain her expectations, sat in a state of painful incertitude and emotion.

At length Mr. Mordaunt appeared; but he accosted her without any peculiar meaning in his eye, and she eagerly watched in vain for a sentence, a word, or signal that she could translate in favour of her wishes: he slightly mentioned,

mentioned, indeed, their miſchance of the preceding evening, but the name of Oberne did not eſcape his lips.

To increaſe her diſquiet, Mr. Creſſy, who was a profeſſed man of taſte, and a connoiſſeur of faſhionable attractions, tormented her with aſſurances of an improved manner; and very ſeriouſly declared that her *tournure* was charming.

Mrs. Creſſy ſmiled, and nodded her approbation to theſe encouraging informations, and even her mother aſſented, but not without a change of colour, and a motion of the head that looked ſuſpicious.

Old Philip, who acted as groom of the chambers, now threw open the drawing-room door, and announced Mr. Leſley. Roſella was diſappointed; but ſhe would not even yet give up her hopes, till they deſcended to dinner without evincing any expectation of an addition to the party, and her ſpirits then ſunk in proportion as they had been buoyant before.

Mr. Creſſy, who ſat next her, and imagined that ſhe was overwhelmed with timidity upon this occaſion, affected to encourage her, that ſhe might ſhake it off; and Mr. Mordaunt, who liked neither his niece nor her huſband, was rather ſilent; but Mrs. Creſſy made up for his taciturnity by an inceſſant cant gabble, compoſed of ſhreds of incomprehenſible philoſophy, common-place chit-chat occurrences, *bon-mots* uttered in her box at the Opera, the brilliant atchievements of Engliſh Admirals, and the Spartan harangues of the French Directory, mixed up with a perpetual tide of ſmiles and ſimpers, and occaſional alluſions to the excellent arrangements of her own eſtabliſhment, rather

at

at the expence of that which her mother ſuperviſed.

All this was evidently directed to Mr. Leſley, who ſtemmed the torrent, or ſailed with the ſtream, as well as he was able, and contrived, now and then, to call the momentary attention of Roſella, by an occaſional appeal to her ſentiments and opinion.

When the ladies withdrew after dinner, Mrs. Methwald retired with her daughter to her own dreſſing-room, to repeat the hiſtory of Miſs Venables and Oberne; and Roſella threw herſelf into a ſeat in the drawing-room, well pleaſed to be thus left to the indulgence of her reflections, which wholly occupied her for a length of time ſhe was ſo little aware of, that ſhe was ſurpriſed to ſee Mr. Leſley walk into the apartment, when ſhe could not have imagined that the dining-room party had begun to diſperſe.

He looked round very cautiouſly, as if the everlaſting prattle of Mrs. Creſſy were ſtill ringing in his ears, and he feared to behold her at his elbow; but finding himſelf agreeably miſtaken, he haſtened to Roſella, and with ſcarcely any preliminary, dreading perhaps an interruption from the return of the ladies, or the entrance of the gentlemen, he entreated her permiſſion to apply to Mr. Mordaunt for his countenance in addreſſing her.

Roſella, indignant at a precipitation that indicated a tolerable aſſurance of ſucceſs, and confuſed at the nature of the demand, heſitated for an anſwer, when the voice of Mr. Creſſy in the adjoining room added to her agitation.

"You do not forbid me then?" ſaid Leſley.

She had not time to undeceive him before Mr. Creſſy entered, who fancying he had made an important diſcovery, turned from the lady to the gentleman with a very ſignificant ſmile, and hinted rather plainly at the ſtyle of converſation he believed he had interrupted; whilſt Roſella endeavoured in vain to ſhut her ears againſt his *innuendos*, which created in her an impatience ſhe could ſcarcely control; nor did Mrs. Creſſy, when ſhe condeſcended to re-appear, hear them with more *ſang froid*.

Her huſband, as much pleaſed with his newly poſſeſſed ſecret as a monkey is with a piece of looking-glaſs, flew off after coffee, to circulate it amongſt thoſe of his aſſociates who remained in town; and the dearth of topics from the deadneſs of the ſeaſon, joined to his induſtry, had in a very ſhort ſpace the expected effect of rendering entirely public the approaching marriage of Lady Morteyne's brother with Mr. Mordaunt's ward; who was talked of under a variety of characters, amongſt which that of the amiable and captivating young heireſs began to preponderate.

The next morning her good old friend deſired that ſhe would follow him into his ſtudy; and when ſhe was ſeated, he put on his ſpectacles in ſilence, and rummaged amongſt ſome papers for nearly five minutes, exclaiming at intervals—

"Pſha—that is not it—yes—no—I have miſlaid it!"

"Can I aſſiſt your ſearch?" ſaid Roſella, with a palpitating heart; "may I enquire what you miſs?"

"A letter, my dear—a letter that relates to you?"

"To

" To me, Sir !"

" Yes, yes—you are ſurpriſed, I ſuppoſe, that I ſhould receive a letter relating to you ; and I am equally, and more unaffectedly, ſurpriſed at the aſſurance of the fellow."

Roſella, who was thinking of Oberne, felt chagrined and hurt.

" You are no longer," reſumed the old man, " Roſella Montreſor, poſſeſſing merely a competency, whom the ſwarm of money-hunting puppies would have overlooked !—No—you are now charming, faſcinating !—You are amiable, accompliſhed, and irreſiſtible it ſeems !—And ſince the death of your good friend, and your acquiſition of fortune, you are ſuddenly ſo improved in loveline ſs, that I have received in your behalf two tenders of wounded hearts, and very deep palmed hands, which a leſs ſum than thirty thouſand pounds would not fill up.

Roſella could not reply with vivacity to this juſt obſervation ; indeed ſhe hoped that it was not juſt—ſhe hoped that Oberne would have acted in the ſame manner, had ſhe ſtill been the inſignificant Roſella Montreſor, with only two thouſand pounds to preſent him. How great then was her ſurpriſe to find, that poor or rich, an unprotected orphan, or a wealthy ward, Oberne thought not of her ! at leaſt he had not given any proof that he did ; for the two propoſals Mr. Mordaunt ſpoke of, were from the unthought-of Povey, and Mr. Leſley : the firſt by letter, the ſecond in perſon before he withdrew on the preceding evening.

The countenance of Roſella betrayed a very ſtrongly-marked diſappointment ; but her old friend appeared not to obſerve it.

" As

"As for this Povey," said he, "you will not be displeased, I suppose, if I reject his suit, though my coadjutor, Ellinger, favours his pretensions it seems; but that is easily accounted for: he imagines that if this puppy obtains your money, he will not be in a hurry to return his quill; and young Ellinger, I hear, has made himself useful to the uncle, who, since his hopeful nephew deserted him, has undertaken to advance the lad's interest.—But Mr. Lesley's application deserves attention; and, if my advice has any weight, you will take time to reflect upon it. He is a young man of family, possesses a respectable property, and is nobly allied."

Rosella would scarcely suffer Mr. Mordaunt to conclude the sentence—

"Ah Sir!" exclaimed she, "did you not this moment say, that but for the kind remembrance of Mrs. Delaval, this man would probably not have condescended to notice me? and can I experience any gratitude for an attachment so mercenary?"

"There, there!" returned Mr. Mordaunt, "now you must sport your romance and heroics!—I thought, child, you had been surfeited of such folly.—In the name of God, do you suppose a man is to cull a wife out of a dairy or a hay-field, to prove that he is disinterested? Or that he is to provide a race of beggars to his family name, to shew the world that he despises the dross that is to buy them bread?—If you don't mean to accept the proposals of any man till you are assured that he is wholly indifferent to your fortune, by all means divest yourself of every farthing, and wait till you are sought after portionless and destitute."

Rosella

Roſella ſaw that he was diſpleaſed, and ſuppreſſed what further ſhe wiſhed to urge; yet ſhe found in herſelf ſo great a repugnance to encourage, even tacitly, any idea that ſhe could be induced from motives of intereſt, or as Mr. Mordaunt might have ſaid, of prudence, to admit the ſuit of Mr. Leſley, that ſhe ventured, when he became calm, to ſay ſo.

"Pſha!" ejaculated he; "I ſhall not take an anſwer this day or two.—Stay—I almoſt forgot to tell you that I think you had better not mention to whom we were obliged for aſſiſtance the other night, unleſs indeed you are queſtioned upon the ſubject; for it may be thought ſingular that the young gentleman ſhould *happen* to be on the road ſo opportunely, and you are not ignorant of the vile, ill-natured babble that has been circulated.—By the way, the exchange I propoſed, that you might not be compelled to ſtay at home the whole of yeſterday morning, was not approved by Mr. Oberne; for it *happened* that he forgot the appointment. I might perhaps in the interview have thought and ſpoken of the future and the paſt, and it may be that he has only a taſte for contemplating the preſent: and beſides this, I am free to confeſs that there *is* a trifling perceptible difference between a handſome young woman and a crabbed old fellow."

"You have not ſeen Mr. Oberne then?" ſaid Roſella, in a tone of half-ſtifled vexation.

"Neither have I heard any thing of him," replied he.

She felt mortified, but would not venture any comment; and her old friend being compelled

at

at this moment to attend to other buſineſs, they parted.

Wherefore ſhould Oberne, who was all openneſs, avoid a converſation with Mr. Mordaunt? was a queſtion ſhe repeated ſeveral times.—He had been, ſhe thought, too explicit to be miſtaken; yet if her hopes ſhould have miſled her—if Oberne, in his letter to Miſs Venables, had alluded to another!—This ſuppoſition was too painful to be long entertained, and at length ſhe ſoothed her inquietude by concluding that the report of her increaſed fortune had reached him, and prevented the intended application. This obſtacle ſhe ardently wiſhed to remove, and end at once the expectations Mr. Leſley might have formed, which ſhe would have done, notwithſtanding her reluctance to irritate her well-meaning and affectionate adviſer, but that the everlaſting preſence and watchful eye of Mrs. Creſſy perpetually prevented the *tête-à-tête* which he ſought, and which Roſella would not avoid.

Ten days paſſed in a ſuſpenſe and inquietude ſhe could ill conceal: in this interval ſhe received her little *coffre-fort* from her mother, and was ſurpriſed, but not gratified, to find that it contained all the jewels of value Miſs Beauclerc poſſeſſed; but ſhe remonſtrated in vain upon the ſubject.

The portrait of her father excited a variety of mixed ſenſations, accompanied by curioſity and intereſt to learn his adventures and misfortunes, the more teaſing, as ſhe had once had it in her power to gratify them; and Mr. Mordaunt not only refuſed to impart any circumſtance at preſent, to revive unpleaſant recollections, but enjoined Roſella, as ſhe valued the peace

peace of mind of her mother, not to mention the ſubject to her.

The marriage of Lady Lucy had been publicly announced the fourth day from their meeting; and the peculiar fretful turn of Mrs. Methwald's temper and habits heightened her wiſhes for the moment when her amiable friend could, with propriety and convenience, perform her generous promiſe of claiming her as a viſitant; for it was rather extraordinary that the good lady, notwithſtanding her apophthegms on decorum and the wonderful effects of a proper education, actually appeared inconſolable that her daughter, the moſt peerleſs of ſenſible and accompliſhed women, ſhould loſe a dangler by the trumpery attractions of an abſurd girl, who conducted herſelf entirely without method, who never made incomprehenſible extracts from incomprehenſible authors, never ſtudied the high-ſounding ebullitions of a crack brained writer to improve her language, or looked into Voltaire or Rouſſeau to improve her morality.

At this moment however, unpleaſant as were the conſequences of Mr. Leſley's aſſiduity to Roſella, as both Mrs. Methwald and her daughter had particular reaſons not to offend Mr. Mordaunt by openly affronting his ward, their reſentment was confined to trifling ſubjects, from which uncomfortably as ſhe could not but feel affected by it, ſhe had no apparent reaſon to complain.

Roſella was thus ſituated, when one morning Mrs. Methwald received a billet from Miſs Venables, with whom ſhe conſtantly kept up an intercourſe of note writing, independent of very aſſiduous viſitings on either ſide; but this

this billet was of so much more importance than usual, that the good lady was agitated from head to foot on reading it; and having, very much against the inclinations of Rosella, sent her to dine with Mrs. Cressy, that she might not be placed in the indecorous predicament of sitting at a table where the mistress of it was absent, she threw herself into her carriage, and was taken to her friend's house, where she had previously declared she should spend the day.

At Mrs. Cressy's Rosella learned the occasion of this commotion; for there the master of the house, whose motions were not always regulated by profound wisdom, deferred an excursion he was making, and flew home, when he had already rode several miles, to spread the news of Lord Clanallan's death, which happened the day before.

Rosella was much affected by this intelligence.—Oberne, the generous Oberne, would now no longer be compelled to quit his country, to seek a precarious existence in another; he was now at liberty to claim her hand, and the most rigid guardian could not withhold his consent: but would he still be the same Oberne, who sought her society under the disadvantages with which she had first appeared to him—who, when others contemned and insulted, justified and defended her?

Mrs. Cressy, who adopted what she called easy manners when her own convenience was in question, had dined *tête-à-tête* with her guest, and amused her by requiring her assistance to alter her head-dress for the evening, when she really had, or pretended she had an indispensable engagement; and then desiring Rosella to make use of her books and

music

muſic as ſhe thought proper, or, if ſhe choſe to return home, to take a ſervant to attend her, ſhe ſmiled, curtſied, and ſtept to her carriage.

Roſella, knowing that Mr. Creſſy was not expected to return till the next day, ſat indulging, in liſtleſs inactivity, the reveries that ſtole upon her till the twilight came on: the ſtillneſs of the evening, and a few reflections upon the rude neglect of Mrs. Methwald and her daughter, which would intrude amidſt others more welcome, had given them a tinge of melancholy.

"There is but one being," thought ſhe, "of whoſe affection I can be ſo far aſſured that at this moment I may venture to believe ſhe reciprocally thinks of me; and from her I am ſeparated by the effect of that very ſenſibility ſhe indulges!—Excepting her, there is no one to whom I ſhould dare to confide my ſentiments but the amiable Lady Lucy Delamere!—Ah! when, when ſhall I be relieved from the miſeries of forced civility, half-ſtifled malignity, ſtudied ſlights, and a reſtrained intercourſe with all around me?"

The opening of the door interrupted her ſoliloquy, and ſhe was at once ſurpriſed and diſconcerted to ſee Mr. Creſſy walk into the room.

"My charming Roſella," exclaimed he, "you perceive that I have abridged my abſence in the ſucceſsful hope of finding you here at my return."

"Sir!" ſaid Roſella, with a look not ſufficiently grateful perhaps for the condeſcenſion thus announced.

"Nay,"

"Nay," he resumed, "don't affect the dignity of the old school—those expressive eyes have not been so encouragingly cast down at my constant approach, without a cause. My dear child, you either guessed that I admired you, or wished that I should: and faith, whether it was the one or the other, you displayed some judgment in the intimation!"

This vanity and assurance almost silenced Rosella, who was tormented by an apprehension that she might undesignedly have authorized such an opinion; scarcely knowing what she meant to say, she was going to mention the permission Mrs. Cressy had given her, to be attended home by one of her servants; but when she uttered the lady's name, he interrupted her by repeating it with a horrible grimace.

"Mrs. Cressy!" exclaimed he: "a woman with a countenance, both as to form and expression, the exact resemblance of a demure tabby-cat blinking in a window!—In the name of propriety and decorum, let her mouse where she pleases; but never let me be tormented either with her velvet paws or her uncased nails!"

"These are not proper sentiments, Sir," returned Rosella, "for me to listen to; the friendship of Mrs. Cressy——"

"Her friendship!" retorted he, bursting into a fit of laughter: "you jest, my dear Miss Montresor—it is her pride and boast that she never was weak enough to profess or entertain a friendship for any woman.

"She

" She ſpeaks and acts ('tis ſaid) juſt as ſhe ought;
" But never, never reach'd one gen'rous thought—
" So very reaſonable, ſo unmov'd,
" As never yet to love, or be belov'd!"

" I have little intereſt, Sir," ſaid Roſella, impatiently, " and I find ſtill leſs ſatisfaction in this diſcuſſion. The character of Mrs. Creſſy——"

" You are right," interrupted he, " her's is a character that cannot excite the one, or be productive of the other; let us diſmiſs the ſubject for a more pleaſant one."

Roſella, without replying, roſe from her ſeat, and rung the bell; and Mr. Creſſy then endeavouring to recollect himſelf, aſſumed a diſengaged air, whilſt he reproached her prudery, and laughed at her ignorance of the faſhionable converſation of young gentlemen, married and unmarried; and her want of practice of that exceſs of complaiſance and good-nature, with which the ſoft-mannered Miſſes of Ton were wont to liſten to it. However, as importunity was a thing he abhorred to employ with others, or be tormented with himſelf, he readily acceded to her wiſh of returning home; and having, with his accuſtomed verſatility, very ſtrenuouſly recommended to her to receive the overtures of his friend Leſley with more indulgence than ſhe had hitherto diſplayed, he ordered a ſervant to attend her, whilſt he ſtrolled to Brookes's, to ſee who had dropped in there.

As Roſella ſtopped at Mr. Mordaunt's door, Leſley walked up to it, and congratulating himſelf upon this fortunate *rencontre*, accompanied her into the houſe.

Mrs.

Mrs. Methwald was not returned, and the drawing-room was empty; whither old Philip followed them with lights, and delivered to Roſella a letter, which ſhe had a ſtrong preſentiment was from Oberne. The preſence of Mr. Leſley was now doubly irkſome to her; ſhe ardently longed to break the ſeal, hurry over the contents, and know her future deſtiny; nor did ſhe at that moment recollect how impoſſible it was that Oberne ſhould have choſen a time ſo improper for the ſubject ſhe ſurmiſed.

Mr. Leſley, diſregarding her abſence of mind, her evident diſcompoſure, and thoſe unfavourable ſymptoms which might have intimidated a leſs determined lover, ſupplicated to be heard with indulgence whilſt he explained a circumſtance that much occupied him.

Roſella made no reply; indeed ſhe was very earneſtly ruminating upon the probable contents of the epiſtle ſhe had carefully conveyed into her pocket.

"My dear Miſs Montreſor," reſumed Leſley, "I underſtand from one of your friends, that the connection between Miſs Beauclerc and yourſelf is not of a nature to be diſſolved; but that the prudence of your guardians has prevailed that the ſecret may remain one."

The attention of Roſella was completely arreſted by this prelude.

"Permit me to enquire," ſaid ſhe, "to which of the few friends I boaſt, you are indebted for this intelligence?"

"Perhaps," returned the gentleman, you already gueſs: I will inform you, however, that I heard it from the prim lips of that moſt inſupportable of all women, Mrs. Creſſy. Yet

do

do not imagine that the communication, unpleasant as I confess it was, has in the smallest degree altered my sentiments;—you are sufficiently amiable to maintain an influence with me, too powerful to be shaken by an incident, which indeed displays your circumspection in a situation of so much difficulty as the one in which I first saw you. I have only further to say upon this subject," added he, "that I much applaud the measures Mr. Mordaunt has taken, which remove every obstacle to an alliance I earnestly wish, and to which I will flatter myself my charming Miss Montresor is not averse"

Rosella, equally mortified and incensed, was for a moment silent.

"I know not," said she at length, "why Mrs. Cressy should take the trouble to descant upon a circumstance which she acknowledges her uncle wishes to be untalked of!—I must profess myself, however, obliged to you for your favourable opinion of me; but I will, at the same time, observe, that no person shall, directly or indirectly, dictate to me the terms on which I ought to live with Miss Beauclerc, but Miss Beauclerc herself, whose pleasure it is that I act as I do: and if at this moment she were to inform me that she had altered her plan, I would subscribe to her wishes, not only with cheerfulness, but with real satisfaction."

"I admire your principles and your sentiments," replied Mr. Lesley, changing his tone; "and I hope to conciliate——"

"Pardon me," interrupted she, with earnestness, "if I say that what I have declared is merely with a view to place my conduct in a proper light, before a person who professes himself

himself acquainted with the motives that govern it; the alliance you condescend to speak of may therefore still have with you the obstacle you supposed to have been wholly removed, and with me it has others, which I may not be anxious to remove."

"You are offended," said Mr. Lesley, "and apparently with justice; but Mr. Mordaunt, perhaps ———"

"I feel no displeasure, Sir," replied Rosella more coolly, "on the contrary, I profess myself indebted to you for the example you have set me of avowing my sentiments with freedom."

She then withdrew, leaving the gentleman in a conflict of pride, mortification, anger, and involuntary admiration, vowing a mortal hatred to the first of women, Mrs. Cressy, who had, by her mischievous prattle and insinuations, involved him in this disgrace.

Rosella, mean time, flew to her own apartment to examine the contents of her letter, and was rather shocked at the formality of the address, which consisted of the solitary word

"MADAM!

"I have," it continued, "already directed an apology to Mr. Mordaunt for having failed to profit by the appointment with which he honored me on Tuesday; but as you may perhaps recollect that my visit was originally intended to you—I believe, at least I hope, you will not think me officious, if I repeat the substance of what I wrote to your friend.

"A sudden and indispensable request from Lord Clanallan, who is alarmingly ill, and wished to see me again almost immediately after

I had

I had quitted him on Tuesday, prevented my attendance in —— street; and the most perplexing and urgent business has hitherto prevented the personal explanation I was anxious to give; which, from intelligence I this morning heard, I have reason to think you would find very little interest in listening to: yet I cannot, by remaining entirely silent, suffer an imputation of negligence and impertinence, I have not deserved.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"ARTHUR OBERNE."

Rosella, stupified by chagrin and disappointment, continued gazing at the letter some time after she had read it, and did not observe for many minutes that it was dated a week back; a circumstance that confirmed her vexation. It required no answer, and it was impossible she could have replied to it with propriety; but not to have received it before the suspicions it betrayed must be cruelly confirmed, was, she thought, extremely teasing and provoking.—And now might not he imagine, should he be undeceived as to her indifference to himself, or any engagement he supposed her to be under to another, that the change in his situation had operated to alter her sentiments?

Her dolorous reflections were at length interrupted by the return of Mrs. Methwald; and she was compelled to attend at supper with very little inclination to partake of it.

Rosella, in her correspondence with her mother, which was regular and uninterrupted, had never mentioned Oberne, both in the fear

of

of reviving unpleasant recollections, and that she might not engage her anew in what might have been called romantic ideas: but this silence she felt to be a great act of self-denial, and she was more than once strongly tempted to break it in her subsequent visits to Avelines, which were attended with more composure, and less productive of unpleasant consequences than the first, as Mrs. Methwald condescended to allow her the use of her brother's carriage, until Miss Beauclerc had accommodated herself with a new one, which was principally intended for the service of Rosella.

And to complete her inquietude, Mr. Mordaunt having arranged some affairs which had hitherto detained him in town, announced his intention of removing his family, for two or three months, to his country-seat, which was a considerable distance from the residence of Miss Beauclerc, and must necessarily prevent the personal intercourse now become her principal consolation.

Rosella had heard that Lord Clanallan, or as she preferred calling him, Oberne, had travelled to Ireland, and she could not therefore expect to see him even if she had remained in London; but she understood, from the communication of Mrs. Cressy to her mother, that Lady Lucy Delamere would pass a few days in the metropolis in a fortnight, in her way to Bognor Rocks, where her brother's family *rendezvoused* for the autumn.

This intelligence rendered the notification of Mr. Mordaunt's intention extremely painful to her; as she feared, by losing an opportunity of seeing Lady Lucy, to lose also a place—insignificant as the conduct of Mrs. Methwald and her

her daughter made her apprehend herſelf to be—in the memory of one ſo ſurrounded by friends, ſo courted by happineſs, ſo engaged in the enjoyment of the preſent, ſo flattered by the proſpects of the future.

The day before the journey, Mr. Mordaunt took Roſella apart, and after ſome preliminary, enquired what miſunderſtanding prevailed between Mr. Leſley and herſelf; and with a little heſitation ſhe informed him of the laſt converſation that ſhe had had with him: nor did her old friend diſapprove her conduct; and ſhe perceived that he was much offended by the officious interference of his niece, though he was rather taciturn on the ſubject.

To Roſella he continued as uſual, kind and attentive; but he retained ſeveral days towards Mrs. Creſſy, who accompanied the party, a gravity of aſpect ſhe vainly endeavored to ſoften by conſtant appeals to his ſentiments, and ſubmitting her own moſt favorite maxims voluntarily to his corrections.

He could not but perceive the inhoſpitable coldneſs of his ſiſter, and he likewiſe diſcerned that it was felt by Roſella; but he knew of no other place to remove her to, which would carry with it the ſame title to reſpect as a reſidence in his houſe afforded her; and he pretended to be blind to the evil he could not remedy, hoping the good ſenſe of his ward would enable her to conceal her diſguſt.

Roſella did indeed conquer it ſo far as to forbear complaint; but every time Mrs. Methwald indulged the peeviſhneſs of her querulous temper, ſhe feared that her viſit was too much lengthened; and every time ſhe declined her converſation in favor of her pen or a book, or

withdrew the whole morning to sit in Mrs. Cressy's dressing-room, where her young guest never had the honour of being admitted, Rosella fancied that it was an intimation not to be mistaken, that, according to the good lady's own words, she was ready to fly to the extremity of the globe to be rid of her.

Mrs. Cressy was however, when they met, extremely civil; indeed she was pleased with the effect she supposed her communication had taken on Mr. Lesley, as she attributed the coldness she could not fail to have observed between Rosella and him, to the discovery she had purposely made; and she could now afford to throw away a little *politesse* upon her favored rival, without much outraging her feelings.

The spirits of Rosella sunk under the contemplation of the many cheerless moments she had yet to pass in this manner; and she began to lose that elasticity of mind, self-love and self-respect inspire, and to suspect that she must herself possess a most unsocial and repulsive disposition, since all the inmates it had been her destiny to know, were equally unpleasing to her, Mr. Mordaunt and her mother excepted.

Her only amusement consisted in solitary walks in the grounds, or in attending her kind old friend to his farm, of which he was very fond. Mrs. Methwald and her daughter were too refined to relish the common-place conversation of the principal part of their neighbours: that is, every family not recommended by some degree of rank or fashion: and unfortunately those with whom they were forward to associate, were in turn equally reserved; so that it was always the same family party, without variation, and without internal

amusement;

amuſement; but extremely philoſophical, regular, learned, quiet, and well-bred. It was indeed a moſt excellent houſehold for a lethargic valetudinarian: but Roſella, who was neither of a ſickly or ſleepy habit, would have given all her worldly goods to have ſtepped out of this apoplectic paradiſe, and have peeped into the world ſhe had quitted, to diſcover how the titled Oberne was filling up his time: if he was with eager haſte, running over the ſame courſe in which he had twice before diſtanced reaſon and prudence, or whether abjuring the errors of his youth, he ſtayed the impetuous ebullitions of a mind, where

" Reformation comes in a flood,
" With a ſtrong heady current, ſcow'ring faults."

Nor did ſhe wiſh in vain: ſhe had received a letter from Miſs Beauclerc, informing her that their kind and mutual friend had ſo adjuſted her affairs, that the trifling offering ſhe wiſhed to make to her Roſella of her own perſonal fortune, he had enabled her to do—an intelligence that communicated no additional ſatisfaction to her diſintereſted daughter, excepting when ſhe reflected that it would render her portion more worthy the acceptance of Lord Clanallan, if indeed he had not forgotten her in the pleaſant proſpects he now contemplated.

As Roſella had no other correſpondent than Miſs Beauclerc, ſhe felt no intereſt in the packet of letters laid upon the breakfaſt-table the following morning; but Mrs. Methwald having rather earneſtly regarded the ſuperſcripture of one of them, put it acroſs the table, repeating in a tone of ſurpriſe—

" For Miſs Montreſor!"

Roſella, according to the uſage eſtabliſhed by Mr. Mordaunt, immediately ſatisfied a very importunate curioſity by tearing it open.

" It is from Lady Lucy Delamere, Sir," ſaid ſhe, her eyes ſparkling with delight; and ſhe put the letter into the hands of her old friend, whilſt the ladies exchanged looks of aſtoniſhment and diſpleaſure.

" This invitation is both pleaſant and honorable, returned he, " and muſt be attended to inſtantly."

With the permiſſion of Roſella, he then paſſed the letter to Mrs. Methwald, who read it over in ſome agitation; and her daughter congratulated Roſella with a ſmile, upon receiving ſo charming a proof of the conſideration of one of the moſt elegant and accompliſhed women in England.

Mr. Mordaunt had now taken up his own packet, and obſerving the writing of Lady Lucy addreſſed to him, immediately gave it the preference.

" Oh ho! here is a ſop to Cerberus!" exclaimed the good man: " this Syren promiſes to love me dearly, if I will prevail with my ſiſter to part with Miſs Montreſor for a month or two; a requeſt, ſhe ſays, ſhe feels the leſs difficulty in making, becauſe ſhe underſtands that Mrs. Creſſy is now with her mother."

A moſt gracious aſſent was inſtantly given, to the infinite delight of the anxious Roſella; and according to the arrangement between Lady Lucy and Mr. Mordaunt, on the third day following ſhe left Mrs. Methwald and her ſimpering daughter to aſtronomize, botanize, and philoſophiſe at their leiſure, whilſt ſhe proceeded towards London in the carriage of her kind old friend,

friend, accompanied by Nancy, and was met by that of Lady Lucy at an appointed place, which conducted her to the town-house of Lord Morteyne, occupied for the present moment by his sister.

CHAP. X.

A touch of heroics—and a final adjustment.

"HERE she is!" cried Lady Lucy, in an accent of pleasure, flying at the same time to meet her guest with the most enchanting suavity.

"Here she is!" echoed her husband, taking the hand of Rosella; her other hand was at the same moment seized—she turned to see by whom, and beheld—

"Mr. Oberne!" exclaimed she.

"No, not Oberne," said Lady Lucy, smiling, and leading her to a seat.

"I mean—I should have said—" hesitated she.

"You have said right," interrupted Lord Clanallan, "I am the same Oberne who have so often proved your patience and good humour; and with you I will know no other appellation."

Lady Lucy observing that Rosella was painfully confused, called him to order, and then

then enquired how ſhe had left the good people at home.

" That is a queſtion of courſe," ſaid Mr. Delamere; " don't anſwer it, my dear Miſs Montreſor, but rather tell us how you think Clanallan——"

" As you cannot behave better," interrupted Lady Lucy, " I ſhall run away with my little friend; and we will ſit and proſe together in my dreſſing-room till you both cry *peccavi*."

And then, in ſpite of promiſe or entreaty, ſhe took the hand of Roſella, and withdrew with her.

When they were quietly ſeated *tête-à-tête*—

" You are ſurpriſed, my dear Miſs Montreſor," ſaid the amiable young woman, " to find Lord Clanallan with us; but I hope you are not much diſpleaſed with me for the little embarraſſment his unexpected preſence has given you."

" It is impoſſible," replied Roſella earneſtly, " that I can feel diſpleaſure even in your Ladyſhip's preſence, much leſs can I be diſpleaſed at any action of your's."

" This latitude you ſo obligingly allow me," returned Lady Lucy with a ſmile, " is a good preſage for my friend Oberne! I have not, however, taken you out of the hands of the Philiſtines to torment you myſelf; ſo I will reſtrain my flippant tongue, and inform you by what means you find him on your arrival, ſo omfortably eſtabliſhed here:—

" When he returned from Ireland, he met by accident Lord Morteyne, and enquired when the world might congratulate Leſley upon his marriage: it happened that my brother knew

knew so little at that moment of the intentions and arrangements of your rejected lover, that his answer did not entirely dispel those doubts our friend had formed from the officious communication of that gossip-loving Cressy; and when he learned that Mr. Delamere and myself were expected in town, he very impatiently awaited our arrival to be assured of the truth. We had been already assailed by the lamentations of poor Lesley, who execrates his own folly in not guarding against the machinations of his prim tormentor Mrs. Cressy; for, with more address than I thought her capable of, she contrived to make him the channel to communicate to you some trifling family objections raised against his suit. Mr. Delamere was therefore empowered to end the uneasy suspense of Lord Clanallan; and as we all abhorred the idea of your remaining in Mr. Mordaunt's enchanted castle, guarded by two such mountain-cats as Mrs. Methwald and her daughter, I resolved to claim the performance of the silent promise I flattered myself you gave me, to favour me with a visit. And from that time Lord Clanallan was not to be driven from the door, 'from morn till dewy eve,' in the fear of missing the happiness of seeing you the first moment of your arrival."

Lady Lucy was now interrupted by a message, importing that her society, and that of her fair friend, was most impatiently wished for in the drawing-room, whither she thought proper to descend.

Lord Clanallan gave a loose to his natural vivacity, Mr. Delamere seconded his cheerfulness, and his charming wife was full of those nameless attentions, those fascinating net-works

that

that draw round the gentler affections, proceeding from a combination of polished suavity, good sense, and good humour—a charm the cold-hearted Mrs. Cressy aimed at in vain, and which, in the high-birthed seductress, degenerates into blandishment.

Rosella felt her own gaiety revive; but it revived like the slow return of health to the feeble, sensibly but not perceptibly. Her heart swam in soft contentment; and she spoke from time to time, to assure herself that she was not sleeping in the next apartment to Mrs. Methwald, and dreaming of happiness she was not destined to know.

In consideration of the fatigue she had endured from her journey, Lord Clanallan was persuaded to depart before midnight, with an invitation to breakfast the next morning.

When he was gone, Mr. Delamere approached Rosella.

"Lady Lucy," said he, "has, I find, stolen a march upon me, and received forgiveness for an error, of which I was still more guilty——"

"Let me entreat," interrupted Rosella, "that you will not renew——"

"I will not," returned he; "only permit me to say, that the paper you addressed to me at Eideva Lodge, I found there on my return from Scotland; and I should have acknowledged the receipt of it sooner, but that I was ashamed to address you when I discovered the extent of my fault.—Indeed I——"

"Now you have said quite enough," exclaimed Lady Lucy: "have the goodness to learn the exact point at which an apology should terminate—

terminate—it requires at leaſt as much judgment as to roaſt a pheaſant: and Monſieur Ferviſe will tell you that a turn too much *l'envoit au diable!*"

This ſally removed the confuſion of Roſella, and they parted for the night with mutual good humour and complacency.

The next day, Lord Clanallan was more than uſually matinal; and Roſella was not quite dreſſed when ſhe heard a double rap at the ſtreet-door, which ſhe concluded was his. She would not however venture to peep from the window; but Nancy, whoſe ſpirits were much elevated ſince ſhe had eſcaped from the dominion of Mrs. Methwald, felt no ſcruple on the ſubject, ſo ſhe haſtily put aſide the blind, and thruſting her head out at the open ſaſh, exclaimed—

"If here iſn't the new Lord Mr. Oberne, God bleſs him!—coomed already!—And a leuks as merry as a grig, for all his black coat!"

In two minutes Lady Lucy's maid came, with an entreaty that Miſs Montreſor would be ſo obliging to tell Lord Clanallan that ſhe would deſcend to the breakfaſt-room in ten minutes: and if his Lordſhip choſe to have any tea or chocolate in the interim, perhaps Miſs Montreſor would have the goodneſs to preſide at the table till Lady Lucy appeared.

Roſella, who perfectly underſtood the meaning of this embaſſy, complied with the requeſt, and entered the apartment where Lord Clanallan awaited her, in a trepidation he could not but obſerve.

"Ah! I ſee," cried he, "that I muſt thank my little friend, Lady Lucy, for this indulgence, which I ſhould not have obtained at Mrs Methwald's for ſix months, I ſuppoſe. Encouraged

and supported as I am," continued he, "by Lady Lucy's good wishes, and her promised good offices, I will hope, dear Rosella, that you still remember poor Oberne with a small degree of complacency: but may I hope too that you will forget his confessed faults and follies, and permit him to apply for a second audience of the grave and prudent Mr. Mordaunt?—whose former appointment I confess I looked forward to with some dread, ill prepared as I was to answer stunning questions about rent-rolls and unmortgaged lands!"

Rosella was rather relieved, as he intended she should be, by this gaiety of style, and congratulated him with a smile, that his proposed emigration was now of necessity deferred a few years longer.

"Ah Rosella!" said he, "I believed that the period of indispensable banishment had overtaken me when I unexpectedly saw you in Charles-street. I thought you refused to return my salutation; and I then felt all the misery of poverty, and the contempt it too often carries with it."

"You mentioned that circumstance when last I saw you," replied Rosella, much hurt that he should again recur to it; "did you not believe my justification?"

"I tell you why I repeat it," said he: "that you may be assured, from judging of the pain I endured at that moment, that I will never again plunge myself into a situation, where my conscience may remind me, that at best I deserve the cruel pity of those whose esteem I covet."

She was silent; but a tear dropped from her eye, and he interpreted it as he wished.

"And

"And now, my amiable Rosella," resumed he, "tell me, have I your consent to pay my compliments to your good old friend Mr. Mordaunt?"

Rosella suddenly recollected that there was another person to whom he ought likewise to apply; and all that Mr. Lesley had said upon the subject instantly recurred to her.

"Mr. Mordaunt, my Lord," said she, withdrawing from him the hand he held, with a change of countenance sufficiently visible, "is not the only one to whom I ought to account for my conduct; perhaps you do not know—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted he hastily, "I know all; and I can never forget that I am indebted to a certain dear friend of our's, for a prospect of the happiness I hope to receive her consent in obtaining."

Rosella felt a weight removed from her heart by this reply: the smile, which apprehension had driven from her lips, stole back again, and Lord Clanallan had little difficulty in persuading her to give him an explicit permission to apply both to Miss Beauclerc and Mr. Mordaunt.

He reprobated, with the generous ardor natural to his character, the idea of disavowing a mother for errors she had abjured, and encouraged Rosella to prove by her conduct the independence of her principles.

"Will you then," exclaimed she, "endeavour to persuade Miss Beauclerc to assume the name and character most properly her's, and add this more important obligation to those I already owe you?"

He was replying with much tenderness when Lady Lucy peeped into the room.

"Have

" Have you left me any breakfaſt ?" ſaid ſhe, advancing: " bleſs me, my dear Miſs Montreſor," ſhe added, on obſerving the *déjeuné* apparatus in its original order, " what an Egyptian taſk you have had !—I fear you will never excuſe me for impoſing it on your good nature !"

Roſella bluſhed.

" I give you notice, good people," reſumed Lady Lucy, " that when my own breakfaſt is ended, I ſhall drive to Hamptonwick, to ſee if my brother's houſe is tenantable; for he has lent it to Mr. Delamere for two or three months. So if you have any inclination to accompany me, I ſhall be thankful, becauſe I ſhall be able to find very ample employment for you."

Roſella looked her gratitude for this intimation, which ſhe tranſlated very juſtly into a wiſh of paying a delicate attention to Miſs Beauclerc, and gratifying the feelings both of mother and daughter; and Lord Clanallan put the hand of their amiable friend to his lips, with a glance equally expreſſive.

Mr. Delamere almoſt immediately appeared, and the converſation became general. He was prevented from attending the party by having buſineſs to tranſact in town; and the two ladies, accompanied by Lord Clanallan, left him with a promiſe of returning to dinner.

When they arrived at Hampton-wick, Lady Lucy, embracing Roſella, told her that ſhe would ſpare her for an hour or two; but that ſhe would detain their mad companion as long as ſhe could prevail upon him to attend to her injunctions.

" Perhaps," added ſhe, in a more timid accent, " Miſs Beauclerc will indulge me with an opportunity of paying my compliments to her in

in perſon;—at all events I will do myſelf the honor of ſending my ticket."

Roſella returned the embrace with ſincere affection; but unable to reply, ſhe left her in ſilence, and was conveyed in five minutes to the arms of her mother, who was not long unacquainted with the pleaſurable change in her ſituation. The particular attachment of Lord Clanallan was the laſt intelligence that met her ear, but it was far from being the leaſt ſatisfactory.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed the anxious mother, "my follies have not permanently injured your happineſs!—Oberne, my dear Roſella, has too much good-nature and generoſity to reproach you in future with thoſe imprudences to which you were yourſelf the victim; and if, as you inform me, he has bought experience and worldly wiſdom from paſt lapſes of diſcretion, you have every proſpect of paſſing your days with as little vexation as a human being has reaſon to hope.—And never, my dear child, diminiſh your comforts by an expectation of uninterrupted felicity ſurpaſſing the lot of mortality!—Perfect happineſs, or happineſs approaching perfection, is, I am now convinced, to be found only in fiction and romance.—Here is Lord Clanallan croſſing the lawn!—Oh Roſella, can I forget what has happened ſince laſt I beheld him?—But I will think only of the future."

His entrance prevented the reply of her bluſhing child, and his aſſiduous reſpect to herſelf, his evident affection for Roſella, ſoon baniſhed unpleaſant recollections. She aſſured him of her entire approbation of his propoſals, and that ſhe derived, from the proſpect of his union

union with her daughter, much future satisfaction to herself in the contemplation of their happiness.

Lord Clanallan had been rather shocked by the alteration still visible in the person of Miss Beauclerc; but he felt a secret gratification in observing the sedateness of her countenance, and the composed gravity of her conversation.

At length Rosella recollected the condescending message of Lady Lucy, and repeated it to her mother.

"Amiable woman!" returned she; "I ought on every account to call first upon her; but if she will have the goodness to wave ceremony in my favour, I confess I shall be pleased to avoid quitting my own inclosure, which at present I do not wish to pass."

Lord Clanallan undertook to inform Lady Lucy of her sentiments; and in half an hour he returned with her.

Miss Beauclerc received this advance with the acknowledgments it merited; and it was late when Lady Lucy reminded Rosella of the promise she had made to Mr. Delamere, of bringing back her guests to dinner. She mentioned however, that in two days she meant to return to the neighbourhood of Avelines to pass some time, and then she would hope that no circumstance could happen to prevent a lasting intercourse between the two families.

Lord Clanallan, eager to secure the approbation of Mr. Mordaunt, would not defer his application beyond the following day; and the good old man, perfectly satisfied with the statement of his *rent-rolls* and *unmortgaged lands*, and reflecting that the proposed union would completely efface every slanderous impression the former

former attendance of Lord Clanallan had occasioned, readily consented to the propoſition; but he adviſed that every idea of acknowledging the very near affinity of Roſella and her friend at Avelines, by diſcloſing her hiſtory, ſhould be given up.

"It is nonſenſe to ſuppoſe," ſaid he, "that people will not comment upon ſuch romantic proceedings, according to the faſhion of their own opinions; and in proportion as malice, envy, and ill-humour prevail, in the ſame degree will acrimonious ſarcaſms be levelled at your peace, which, though you may affect to deſpiſe, will be unpleaſant drawbacks to domeſtic felicity. So take the advice of an old man, and reſpect the prejudices of the world, whoſe atmoſphere you condeſcend to breathe!—Believe me, it is only in a ſentimental novel where fair ladies can Oh yes! all their perils, their follies, hair-breadth eſcapes, imprudences, and ſhip-wrecks; and expect, at the winding-up of the cataſtrophe, to ſail through the remainder of their lives ſo very ſmoothly and pleaſantly, without one little breeze to whiſper a remembrancer of paſt oblique adventures!"

Lord Clanallan ſmiled, and obſerved that it was not his province to endeavour to influence Miſs Beauclerc by an indirect objection to any plan ſhe choſe to adopt; nor did he wiſh to oppoſe any determination ſhe might ultimately form, for whatever it were, the ſentiments he had avowed would remain unalterable; and he merely meant to intimate that her own happineſs and that of Roſella were with him the only conſideration.

Mr. Mordaunt deſired him to leave this point to his diſcretion; and he wrote immediately to

Miſs

Miſs Beauclerc to ſtrengthen her opinion of the efficacy of her ſelf-denial.

Mrs. Methwald and her peerleſs daughter received a ſhock by the intelligence of the approaching marriage of Roſella, which required all their fortitude, and ſelf-command, and imaginary ſuavity of deportment to endure with decent compoſure; for the circumſtance was a ſtrong libel upon their judgment and diſcernment, which had led them to predict that Roſella would remain the inſignificant, unnoticed, myſterious little perſonage they would fain have thought her; and they now foreſaw that they muſt toil hard in the trammels of forced civility and repulſed attentions, before they could induce the future Lady Clanallan wholly to forget the time, when neither maxim nor philoſophy could make them overlook her offenſive youth and beauty, and diſcover her claims to kindneſs.

Miſs Beauclerc, whoſe ſobered ſentiments agreed with thoſe of Mr. Mordaunt, inſiſted that her ſecret hiſtory ſhould be confined to thoſe who were already acquainted with it; at leaſt ſhe would not, by her own avowal, licenſe the familiar comments of careleſs and indifferent aſſociates, who ſpread, either with a malicious deſign, or no deſign at all, reports which wound the ſhrinking boſom of affection, and jar thoſe intereſts which ſhould never be diſunited.

Whilſt Roſella could occaſionally enjoy her ſociety, that of Lady Lucy, and Delamere, and was conſtantly attended by Lord Clanallan with aſſiduous attachment, ſhe ſubmitted with cheerfulneſs to the deciſion; nor did ſhe repine, as he was apt to do, at the preciſe and tedious arrangements

rangements of Mr. Mordaunt, and count the weeks of his firſt mourning with impatience; but ſhe felt hurt, when ſhe diſcovered that Miſs Venables threatened an endleſs reſentment to her amiable niece, for having aſſiſted the pretenſions of her young rival, and vowed that ſhe ſhould never poſſeſs a guinea of her fortune. But Lady Lucy laughed at her threats, and declared that ſhe had acted the part of a dutiful relation in preventing her from marrying an Iriſh fortune-hunter; for ſo, in the fury of her diſgrace and diſappointment, the good lady had openly denominated her once favored Oberne. She could not prevail upon herſelf to practiſe the philoſophy her friend Mrs. Methwald preached; but highly incenſed with her as with every one elſe, ſhe eſpouſed a French Marquis, who offered to engage in her ſervice as an *aide-de cuiſine*.

Roſella had been about ſix weeks in the protection of Lady Lucy, when one morning ſhe was called from her dreſſing-room by the arrival of a gentlewoman, who would not ſend up her name, but deſired to ſpeak to Miſs Montreſor immediately. In ſome trepidation ſhe deſcended to the apartment into which this myſterious perſonage had been uſhered, and beheld the well-remembered face of Mrs. Ellinger.

Roſella checked the ſurpriſe this unexpected viſit occaſioned, and advanced to her old acquaintance with a ſmiling countenance and an extended hand, which the lady, to her extreme conſternation, ſeized with an heroic air, and throwing herſelf on her knees, kiſſed it with great emphaſis of action, and wiped her eyes.

"I am pleaſed to ſee you in good health, Madam," ſaid Roſella, after ſome heſitation; "may

" may I enquire if you have ſeen Miſs Beauclerc this morning?

" No, much-injured girl!" replied the *ci-devant* heroine, with a forced agitation of features; " that lady and I meet no more; but you, whom her conduct and caprices have injured—you who are undone by her criminal concealments—you who are ſtill ignorant to whom you are indebted for life.

Roſella trembled.

" *You* intereſt and affect my heart!—Know then that this boſom poſſeſſes a ſecret—a ſecret to blaſt all your happineſs, ſhould it meet the ear of your lover!"

" Then, Madam," interrupted Roſella, with ſpirit, " I am convinced it ought to meet his ear;—if your aſſertion is juſt, my happineſs is already blaſted; for I practiſe no reſerve with—with my friends. And as I imagine you have been ſo obliging to call upon me to communicate this tremendous ſecret, I ſhall be really thankful if you will end my ſuſpenſe. Impatient however as I feel to learn it, I muſt firſt aſſure you that no circumſtance can for a moment tempt me to ſuſpect Miſs Beauclerc of an intention to injure me, or any human being;—if ſhe has had concealments, they are not criminal ones!"

" I would have you prepare," reſumed Mrs. Ellinger, preſſing her hand upon her heart, as if to ſtill its emotions, " for a diſcovery I am ſorry it is my lot to impart to you, ever beloved Roſella;—know then, that you are—oh Heaven! the daughter of—Miſs Beauclerc!"

" Is this *all* you would tell me?" aſked Roſella.

" God

"God of the univerſe!" exclaimed the poor lady, "what have I done?—Oh child of my deareſt hopes, give way to your diſtraction, tear your hair, rend your boſom—any thing but this calm ſettled deſpair!"

"I am ſorry I cannot comply with every requeſt of your's, Mrs. Ellinger," ſaid Roſella, with great gravity; "but as I am not really in a deſpairing mood, I have little inclination to act ſuch a tragedy.—I am concerned that you have had ſo much trouble in ſeeking me out, merely to mention a circumſtance I was well acquainted with."

Mrs. Ellinger gazed at her with an expreſſion of countenance ſo ludicrouſly woeful, that Roſella could not forbear ſmiling.

"Acquainted with it!" exclaimed ſhe; "my God! no *denouement*—no cataſtrophe!"

"No, my dear Madam," replied Roſella with ſome gaiety; "Lord Clanallan and myſelf thought it would be more novel to omit the uſual ceremony of gathering together all the *dramatis perſonæ*, to rip up budgets of old ſtories, and—man, woman, child, maſter, miſtreſs, domeſtics, tenants, vagrants, friends, relations, and ſpectators—all cry, laugh, relate, be facetious and ſentimental in the *finale* chorus!"

Mrs. Ellinger, diſconcerted by the failure of her ſublime ſcheme, and thus attacked on a favourite ſubject, was diſpoſed to be heroic; but Roſella ſtopped the torrent juſt in time, by a gentle reprimand for her juſtice and ingratitude to Miſs Beauclerc, who had ever treated her with attention and friendſhip.

"I cannot however forget," continued ſhe, "that Mrs. Ellinger, as the wife of my guardian, deported

deported herself with much kindness towards me in my childhood."

The lady, extremely softened by this acknowledgment, recollected that it would be very desirable to preserve the favour of Lady Clanallan, whose countenance would give her a part of the consequence she had lost by quitting the roof of her husband; she therefore received the intimation with gratitude, and having declined the vulgarity of accepting refreshment, took her leave, saying she would write to Miss Beauclerc, whose affection she feared to have much diminished by the unjust accusations with which she had loaded her in a former letter; a circumstance that had never reached the knowledge of Rosella, who adopted in this instance the same prudent concealment, and by forbearing to mention the present folly of Mrs. Ellinger, avoided a retrospection of the influence she had unfortunately possessed over the actions of Miss Beauclerc at a former period; and the visit did not even reach the knowledge of Lady Lucy.

This amiable young woman displayed each day a more confirmed attachment to her fair guest, as each day unfolded to her observation the characteristic virtues and graces of Rosella; but at length they were compelled to separate, for Mrs. Methwald claimed the privilege of directing her brother's ward in the envied task of exchanging five hundred pounds for cloths and ornaments—a task Rosella left almost wholly to her, to procure peace and good-will when, for a short time, she again returned to the house of her good old friend. And whilst Mrs. Methwald was making daily perambulations to enforce the execution of her orders, she flew down to Avelines in her mother's carriage, to pass an hour

hour with her, and another with Lady Lucy; a period generally ſpent by Lord Clanallan, who *happened* almoſt conſtantly to meet her on the road, in lamenting the heavy fetters of ice with which the preſence of Mrs. Methwald and her daughter appeared to load the ſentiments and manners of Roſella, who pleaded guilty to the charge, and conjured him to retain his patience a little longer.

Lady Lucy laughed at his complaints, and rallied him upon his want of knight-errantry, in ſuffering his fair dulcina to remain in ſuch a cruel ſtate of enchantment; but promiſed at length to uſe his influence with Mr. Mordaunt to abridge the term of his wintry puniſhment.

In one of theſe excurſions Roſella unexpectedly encountered Lord and Lady Morteyne, who, in paſſing through town, had deviated from their road to viſit Lady Lucy and her huſband. She felt rather confuſed for the firſt five minutes; but the conciliating deportment of Lady Morteyne, who was much hurt at her former injuſtice, and wiſhed to efface it from the memory of her ſiſter's friend, and the polite attentions of Lord Morteyne, ſoon reſtored her to compoſure, and baniſhed unpleaſant recollections of the *fracas* at Guairdy.

Roſella had heard, from common report, that Mr. Eſtcourt was perfectly recovered from the effects of his accident, and his brother now informed her that he had very carefully concealed how deſervedly he had met with it.

"But," added he to Lady Lucy, "that abſurd fellow Povey, whom Cyril uſed to denominate your knight, either deſignedly or undeſignedly, diſcloſed the ſecret, and our impetuous brother rewarded his officiouſneſs by knocking him

him down on the Steine at Brighton; so that the poor little man, who from his original profession has a great abhorrence of breaking the peace, has been compelled to throw up his commission; and, I presume, would be extremely obliged to any kind friend who would employ him to draw up marriage articles, or make a will."

This important intelligence created little emotion but of laughter; but Rosella was pleased that the affair had terminated so peaceably, as she would have been much grieved to have been again the occasion, however remote, of vexation to Lady Lucy, by endangering the safety of a brother who was beloved by her, in spite of his slender title to her affection.

"I once received very unmerited thanks," said Lord Morteyne, "for a service I was supposed to have exclusively rendered Miss Montresor: but I imagine she has long since discovered to whom the acknowledgments were due."

Rosella, with some emotion, averred that she did not comprehend his meaning; and learned from the explanation that followed, that Oberne himself was the knight-errant who had rescued her from the danger into which her runaway steed had placed her, when she had so unintentionally joined the chace.

She was much surprised at the intelligence; and Lord Clanallan at that moment making his appearance, was questioned upon his long concealment of the circumstance by Lady Lucy.

"I was unwilling," replied he, "upon a further acquaintance with our charming friend, to own that I was the stupid being who could commit her to the care of another, upon the absurd plea I urged to your brother."

"And

"And so you suffered him," resumed Lady Lucy, "to take the whole credit of the exploit to this hour, rather than confess that having followed the impulse of humanity at the hazard of losing your life, you rejected that of gallantry at the hazard of losing your horse!—I would to Heaven," added she, "that the total absence of even politeness and attention, so much to be remarked in the present race of English *petit-maîtres*, could be explained in the same manner."

Lord Clanallan smiled at this apostrophe, and having thanked the good-natured Lady Lucy for the *tournure* she had given to the adventure, changed the subject of conversation.

At length the moment arrived that emancipated Rosella from the dominion of Mrs. Methwald, and rewarded the faithful attachment of Lord Clanallan.

Mr. Mordaunt officiated as her father during the ceremony, and when it was ended, he embraced her with paternal affection.

"I believe," said he, "I have now done my duty as a faithful and conscientious guardian: I am happy that I have not had occasion to exert my power by opposing your inclinations, my dear Rosella: and I trust that some years hence, should I live so long, I shall reflect upon this day with as much satisfaction as I experience at this moment."

Rosella kissed the hand of her venerable friend in silence; and taking leave of Lady Lucy with tenderness, and of Mrs. Methwald with polite acknowledgments, she set off with Lord Clanallan for a hunting-seat of his late brother's in Berkshire, taking Avelines in their way; where they received the fervent benedictions of Miss

Beauclerc

Beauclerc, who could not be prevailed upon to attend the ceremony, from the fear of betraying a too potent emotion, and affecting the ſpirits of her beloved Roſella.

To Lord Clanallan ſhe preſented all the furniture and appurtenances of her town-houſe, and the uſe of it during her life; and the cottage was purchaſed by Mr. Delamere.

Some time after the marriage of Roſella, her mother diſcloſed to her the hiſtory of her own imprudent union, and the unhappy cataſtrophe that enſued; and in conſideration of the former friendſhip between Mrs. Ellinger and herſelf, conſiderably augmented her income, which the diſpleaſure and parſimony of her huſband would not allow him to make a very comfortable one.

Mr. Creſſy and his lady continued for ſome time to live in great apparent cordiality; but at length, to the unſpeakable mortification of Mrs. Methwald, he declared, upon the refuſal of her barbarous brother to make up his affairs, that a pale, prim, ſimpering, philoſophical, deiſtical botanical, aſtronomical, ſophiſtical, ſoft-mannered, flint-hearted automaton was his ſupreme averſion: and his conduct evinced that an exceſſive roſy, open-tempered, ill-educated young lady, whoſe *cidevant* employment conſiſted in making butter and cheeſes, was not ſo entirely unſupportable.

When the dear friends of poor Mrs. Creſſy warmly reſented this atrocity, in condolement and expreſſions of wonder and abhorrence, ſhe ſtill ſmiled in return for their obliging ſympathy, retained her box at the Opera, and frequented aſſemblies as uſual, to the admiration of her mother, who wrote a halting ſonnet in praiſe of ſuch fortitude and magnanimity, and ſent it

to

to be inſerted with other ſublime effuſions, in the Lady's Magazine.

Miſs Beauclerc would have taken Nancy back into her own ſervice, upon the marriage of her young lady; but the poor girl had promiſed herſelf ſuch felicity and honors in being *fam-de-ſham* to a Lord's wife, who is called my Lady all the world over, that Roſella indulged her in her wiſhes, in conſideration of her fidelity and attachment at a moment when they were peculiarly acceptable to her.

The ſelf-denial of Lady Clanallan's mother, in refuſing herſelf a claim ſo dear to the heart of a parent, was rewarded in a few years by the ſociety of a little grand daughter, whoſe mind ſhe was indefatigable in properly forming; and it was remarkable that the young lady underſtood of the words of her own language in general uſe, almoſt every one better than thoſe hacknied expreſſions, *ſentiment* and *myſtery*.

THE END.